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THESIS

TURKEY EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS: GREAT EXPECTATIONS

by

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December 2000

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TURKEY EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS: GREAT EXPECTATIONS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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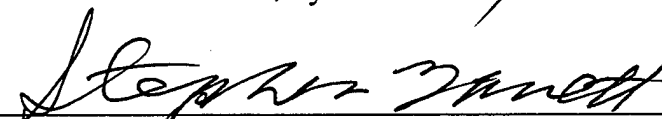
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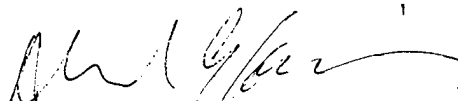
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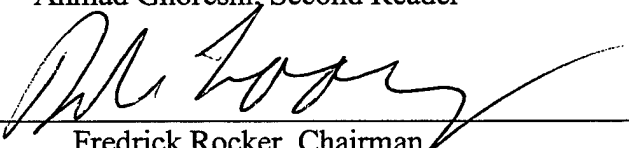
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ABSTRACT

Since 1963 Turkey has been struggling to join the European Union (EU). Despite strong Turkish aspirations, it appears unlikely that Turkey will be accepted as an EU member in the near future due to Turkey's shortcomings in its political, economic and social structure. Applications submitted prior to December 1999, were rejected by the EU Commission on the basis of poor democracy, human rights abuses, restrictions on political and cultural rights, a high level of influence of the Turkish military in political affairs, weak economy, and disputes with Greece and the Cyprus problem. The EU has certain criteria for membership: a functioning democracy, respect for rule of law, protection of minority and human rights, functioning market economy and settlement of disputes with other member states prior to accession. Turkey is seeking an immediate EU membership to improve economy and democratization, and take an undisputable place inside the European order and civilization. To this end, Turkey has to adopt the necessary reforms and regulations that will help strengthen democracy, economy and social and cultural rights in Turkey. However, Turkey's present domestic infrastructure does not provide a suitable situation to commence key radical political reforms in the immediate future.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	EU POLICIES ON ENLARGEMENT AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP.....	7
A.	GENERAL POLICIES	7
B.	COPENHAGEN CRITERIA AND AGENDA 2000 ENLARGEMENT PLAN	12
C.	THE POLICIES AND PROBLEMS WITHIN THE EU PREVENTING AN EARLY ACCESSION OF TURKEY	15
1.	The Economic Situation within the European Union	15
2.	Institutional Reforms	17
3.	Labor and Unemployment Inside the European Union and the Immigration Problem	18
4.	The Common Agricultural Policy.....	19
5.	Priority of the Eastern European Countries	20
III.	THE MAIN OBSTACLES PREVENTING TURKEY'S FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION	23
A.	TURKEY'S SHORTCOMINGS THAT EVOLVE DIRECTLY FROM ITS DOMESTIC SITUATION.....	23
1.	General Evolution	23
2.	Democratization Process.....	24
3.	Turkish Economy.....	44
4.	Turkish Cultural and Religious Life	49
B.	TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GREECE AND THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.....	53
1.	Turkey Greece Relations.....	53
2.	The Cyprus Problem	56
IV.	MUTUAL BENEFITS OF TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU FOR TURKEY AND THE EU	61
A.	TURKISH BENEFITS FROM EUROPEAN UNION MEMBERSHIP ...	61
B.	THE EUROPEAN UNION BENEFITS FROM TURKISH MEMBERSHIP.....	67
V.	CONCLUSION.....	71
	APPENDIX.....	77
	LIST OF REFERENCES	87
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	93

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 General Information Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey	78
Table 2 Demographic Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey	79
Table 3A Economic Data Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey.....	80
Table 3B Economic Data Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey.....	81
Table 4 Labor Force Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey.....	82
Table 5 Export and Import Trade Rates of 12 EU Candidates and	
Turkey with the European Union.....	83
Table 6 The Visa Policy in Europe	84
Table 7 The Results in Last Four Parliamentary Elections in Turkey.....	85
Table 8 The Human Sufferings in Terrorist Fighting in Southeastern Turkey.....	86

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since the first application of Turkey for membership of the European Union (EU) in 1963, Turkey has waited patiently while other states, not subject to the same conditions set by the EU for Turkey, have been accepted as members. Despite the fact that Turkey strongly desires to join the EU, Turkey is potentially the last country in Europe expected to gain membership in the EU, because of its short and long-term domestic and international problems, such as poor democracy, insufficient economic capacity, problems with Greece in the Aegean Sea and the divided status of Cyprus after the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus in 1974.

The end of the Cold War created new concerns over Turkish accession into the EU. The newly freed countries of Eastern Europe from the Soviet hegemony have applied for the EU membership and jumped the line before Turkey. The EU has made it clear that the enlargement of the EU to include these Central and Eastern European countries is a moral obligation and a historical opportunity for a stable, peaceful, prosperous Europe. This new environment made the process of joining the EU more complex for Turkey. Currently 12 countries and Turkey are waiting for the entrance into the EU (see Figure 1 on page 2).

After the end of the Cold War, Turkey's strategic importance in the defense and security system of Europe decreased in terms of preventing any possible Soviet threat, since the Soviet Union no more exists, but on the other hand, the strategic importance of Turkey also increased to provide and keep the peace and stability in the southeastern flank of Europe, because of ongoing conflicts in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Northern Iraq, and the Middle East.

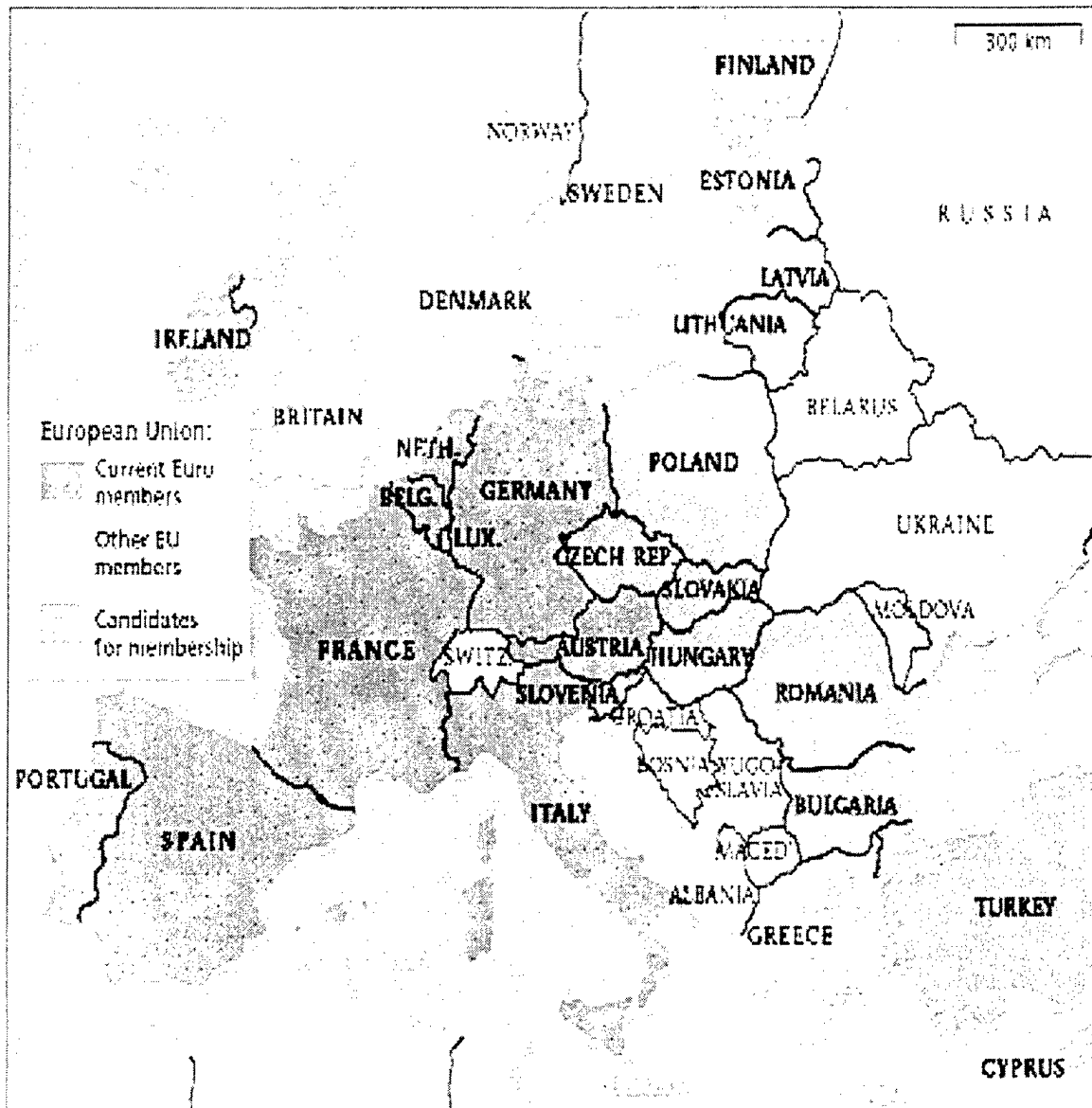


Figure 1: The Enlargement Process of the European Union (The EU has not started Accession Talks with Turkey yet.)
 From Ref. [Shaping the Union, *The Economist* , 07 December 2000].

During 1990s, the EU began to structure itself as the civic society of Europe with its own interpretations and visions of democracy, rule of law, human rights, protection of minority rights, and market economy. Since this development in European societal structure, relations between EU and Turkey have taken a form for the worse. Turkey's domestic issues, which were not previously regarded as roadblocks for the integration of Turkey into Europe, have become major obstacles for Turkish accession into the EU.

The rise of radical Islam and the separatist Kurdish movement currently pose major threats to the stability of Turkey. In this respect, according to Turkish politicians and military leaders, Turkey lives a high-stakes dilemma, in which the Turkish government must choose between adopting regulations that promote respect for individual rights, protection of minorities, respect for human rights and rule of law, or experience a huge insurgency (including the possible disintegration of the state caused by separatist actions) and the instability caused by radical Islamic movement.¹

In regard to finding a solution to this dilemma, the Turkish Military plays a major role in shaping the policies designed to alleviate the crises. Because of this powerful influence, the role of the Turkish military in governing Turkish society is another primary concern for the EU in assuring itself of the status of Turkey's democracy.

Two other major EU concerns about Turkey are its relations with Greece and the historical debate over the ownership of Cyprus. Although Turkey's relations with Greece have strengthened after the devastating earthquakes in both countries in 1999, the major problems between two countries are still expected to be addressed by two countries and

¹ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey- the Last Line of Defence, *The Economist*, p. 13, London, 10 June 2000.

the EU. The other matter of concern, which is also related to Greece, is the divided status of Cyprus.

Turkish motivations for joining the EU have various political, economic, defense and sociological sources. With Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey and president until his death in 1938, Turkey has advanced rapidly in the process of westernization--a process that has continued until now. Most of the Turkish intellectuals regard Turkey as a European country. But some political groups, especially the Islamic faction, see Turkey as an Islamic oriented country. Some western intellectuals, including Samuel Huntington, a well-known author in the United States of America, have also pointed out the oriental-based, divided cultural structure of Turkey.² Nevertheless, for many Turks, the EU represents Europe, and EU membership will confirm the acceptance of Turkey's status as a European country.

Because of its geographical location, Turkey has a critical place in the defense of Europe. Eventhough, Turkey has not acquired EU membership yet, Turkey is already playing an important role in European affairs as a member of NATO and many Western European organizations such as the European Council, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Western European Union (WEU). Moreover, the EU has granted Turkey the candidacy status in its Helsinki Summit in December 1999.

Turkey is pushing hard to gain acceptance into the EU. Applications submitted prior to December 1999, were rejected by EU Commission on the basis of:

- Weak democratic institutions and low respect for rule of law;

²Huntington, S. P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, pp.144-145, New York, A Touchstone Book, 1997.

- Human rights abuses;
- Abuses and suppression of the political-social and cultural rights of its Kurdish originated citizens;
- High level of influence of the Turkish military in political affairs;
- Weak economy; and
- Disputes with Greece and the Cyprus problem.

Other than these official reasons, there are additional political, institutional, cultural and economic reasons preventing Turkish accession into the EU, evolving from the EU itself or from EU member states.

The following questions will form the theoretical basis for the unresolved debates investigated in this thesis: (1) Where is Turkey's place in the complex European organization? (2) Is Turkey really part of Europe? and, (3) Why does Turkey have such a low priority in the European's list of potential candidates to gain acceptance into the EU? This thesis will argue that Turkey has no real alternative other than to join the EU, despite tremendous obstacles, (which are mainly domestic). This thesis will also argue that, with its historical and current ties to Europe, Turkey is a European country. However, its full integration into the European Union will be a difficult and lengthy one due to Turkey's short and long-term problems and the EU's policies.

This paper will be organized in five chapters. The questions of what EU and Europe means to Turkey, and Turkey's place in contemporary European society are the main focus of the Introduction, and will lay out the theoretical basis for thesis. The second chapter deals with the EU regulations and policies about enlargement, the EU's

membership criteria for the applicants, and the policies and problems within the EU preventing an early accession of Turkey.

The third chapter will discuss the obstacles that prevent acceptance of Turkey into the EU in detail. I will examine the current status of the problems *vis a` vis* the EU requirements and the Turkish government's plan to make the necessary regulations through laws.

The fourth chapter will examine how each party could gain mutual benefits from Turkish accession into the EU. What aspects of the EU are the most attractive for Turkey, and could Turkey use EU membership to settle its long lasting problems? This chapter will also briefly address the current status of Turkey's other international relations in the region.

The fifth chapter will conclude that EU membership for Turkey is, and will continue to be a top priority, and will enable Turkey to thrive as a modern, prosperous, democratic and stable European country. To this end, both the EU and Turkey should engage in mutual recognition of their respective expectations, challenges and policies for a stronger Europe.

II. EU POLICIES ON ENLARGEMENT AND REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

A. GENERAL POLICIES

The European Union is aiming to reach two major goals by integrating Europe. As the European Commissioner for enlargement Gunter Verhaugen stated one is reaching to the Civil Europe that provides peace and stability by guaranteeing democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of minorities. The other is creating a market that is open and competitive.³

In Europe the main source of integration had always been some kind of conflict, which in each case had destroyed much of Europe. So, not surprisingly, when it was established after World War II, the first objective of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was to eliminate the causes that could result in another European war, particularly between Germany and France. In this point Gunter Verhaugen also states that, "The process of enlargement is instrumental for solving minority problems and border disputes and is instrumental for the solution of conflicts between neighboring countries... The best way to make Europe a safer place where the nightmares of the past will really disappear is to go ahead with full integration of the European continent."⁴

In addition to preventing any possible future European war, an enlargement of the EU throughout Eastern Europe has serious historical, cultural, social, political and economic implications for all current and prospective EU members. During the 1993 Copenhagen Summit, in Copenhagen, Denmark, the EU decided to admit ten countries

³ Guttman, R. J., European Commissioner for Enlargement: Gunter Verheugen *Europe*, Washington; June 2000. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

⁴ Ibid.

with a combined total population of 105 million (see Table 2 on page 79).⁵ These countries, with low GDPs and GDPs per capita (see Table 1 on page 78), (about one third the EU average) are poorer, and highly diverse in terms of language, religion, ethnic structure, and historical traditions.⁶

Political integration implies the uniform adoption of common democratic values such as democracy, liberalism, rule of law, protection of individual and minority rights and respect for human rights, EU Citizenship, common laws on governmental issues, common defense and security policies and even a European Constitution.⁷

From the economic perspective, the integration of new candidates into the EU both may entail benefits and costs, especially during the transition period from state controlled economy to a market economy. There would be a considerable financial burden, for the EU to help candidates to align their economic, social and political systems with the EU standards. Moreover, it is clear that an enlargement of this scale will constitute unpredictable results for European institutions, interests, policies and the balance of power.

To date, the EU has experienced three major enlargements. The first was the accession of United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland in 1973. The second was the entrance of Greece, Spain and Portugal in 1981 and 1986, respectively. The last was the inclusion of Finland, Austria and Sweden in 1995. The only country, which has refused joining the EU by referendum was Norway in 1994.

⁵ Van Oudenaren, J., "EU Enlargement, Return to Europe," in Tiersky, R., *Europe Today*, p. 407, Lanham, 1999.

⁶ Ibid, 411.

⁷ _____, Our constitution for Europe, *The Economist*, London, 26 October 2000.

Although historically the time frame for approval of applications has varied for all applicants, the EU has not been faced with such a large list of candidates with complex and potentially unstable governments. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the newly freed countries of Eastern Europe turned towards Western Europe and applied to join western organizations like NATO and the EU. All of the candidates have serious problems varying from economical, political, international, ethnic, religious, and social conflicts.

Although the EU did not set an official timetable for the accessions, the position of the Commission is that accession should take place as soon as a candidate is able to assume the obligations of membership by meeting required economical and political conditions.⁸

Obligations for member countries are based on conformance with the tenants of *acquis communautaire*, a term that represents the sum total of the EU's achievements in harmonizing legislation, creation of a single market, and forging common policies. Although it was up to new applicants to meet these criteria, the EU established one condition for itself to meet. The Union should have the capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration.

Other than the official EU enlargement policy, the leading EU members, like France, Germany and UK have different priorities and perspectives on enlargement. For example, France and Germany, as the key players, are striving to create policies that favor their own national interests.⁹

⁸ Van Oudenaren, John, "EU Enlargement, Return to Europe," in Ronald Tiersky, *Europe Today*, pp. 409-410.

⁹ _____, A French Lesson, *The Economist*, London, 29 June 2000.

In May 2000, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer initiated a debate on Europe's future by stating that a federal Europe is still the goal of the Union.¹⁰ The Germans are keen for the EU to expand to the east, with Poland in the forefront. But the French, fearing that that would give Germany even more clout in the EU, are dragging their feet.

French President Jacques Chirac gave a speech to the German Parliament and stated that Germany and France should form a close alliance with each other in order to develop the core of the Union.¹¹ In 1997, Chirac also stated that Poland would be in the Union by the year 2000, and the Czech Republic and Hungary would follow.¹² Now Mr. Chirac and most of the other EU member states' leaders are predicting a date not earlier than 2005 for the first accession. Mr. Chirac, in reply to a German proposal of a Federal Europe, has proposed a two-tier arrangement, with the inner tier formed by a faster moving Franco-German alliance.¹³

Crucial decisions about the future of the EU and enlargement policies will be determined in Nice, France in December 2000. The current French presidency of the Council of European Union is keen to make progress on key issues such as security and enlargement at the Nice Summit.¹⁴ The French, like the British, remain far more reluctant than the Germans to agree to a wide extension of majority voting in the EU's Council of Ministers, where the 15 governments are represented.

Conversely, the United Kingdom's view on enlargement of the EU is smoother with respect to the other EU members. The reason for British eagerness for enlargement

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² —, Make it Ten, Set a Date, *The Economist*, London, 08 June 2000.

¹³ —, A French Lesson, *The Economist*, London, 29 June 2000.

¹⁴ —, Enlargement Pains, *The Economist*, London, 08 November 2000.

lies under its Euro-skeptic mood towards the EU. Britain's problem with the EU is its supra-natural bodies and the democratic deficit caused by the uncontrolled power of the European Commission. Enlargement may cause internal conflicts within the Commission, because of the great increase on the number of commissioners from the member countries and eventually reduce its power, and that is exactly what the British want.¹⁵

British did not want a strong Commission from the beginning.¹⁶ In his recent statements, British Prime Minister Tony Blair made it clear that the role of nation-state is safeguarded and enhanced within the Union, and the federalist vision of the EU should be downgraded. Mr. Blair's recent statements are influenced by Timothy Garton Ash, a well-known historian and expert on Eastern European affairs, and usually emphasizes the need to avoid new divisions between Eastern and Western Europe.¹⁷ Mr. Ash urges that the Union should give priority to the enlargement towards the Central and Eastern Europe. In line with Mr. Ash's view on enlargement, Mr. Blair, by stating the need of setting a definite time for accessions, is calling for enlargement to begin in 2004.¹⁸

The progress reports, which are prepared by the Commission to describe the situations of candidate countries, show candidates where they fall short of EU standards. The Commission wants to imply that the candidates themselves see their shortcomings with respect to the EU requirements, and justify the possible delay in the accession dates. It is now more or less clear that most EU members are envisioning 2005-06 for the first

¹⁵ Ibid, para. 7.

¹⁶ Young, H., *This Blessed Plot, Britain in Europe from Churchill to Blair*, pp. 426-438, Woodstock and New York, The Overlook Press, 1998.

¹⁷ _____, Blair's Vision, *The Economist*, London, 30 September 2000.

¹⁸ _____, It is time to agree to differ, *The Economist*, 05 October 2000.

accession.¹⁹ And the fear in the event of any possible delays, the first date of entry might be pushed beyond 2005. This could clearly result in a crisis of confidence among the candidates.

B. COPENHAGEN CRITERIA AND AGENDA 2000 ENLARGEMENT PLAN

In its Copenhagen Summit in 1993, the European Council, in order to prepare new candidates for accession, set down the following four main conditions that must be met before being allowed to join.

- A functioning democracy with stable institutions.
- Adherence to rule of law, protection of individual rights, respect for human rights and protection of minorities.
- Existence of a functioning market economy and capacity to cope with competitive pressure within the Union.
- Having the ability to take on obligations of political, economical and monetary union.

A fifth condition, which is particularly related to Turkey, is the settlement of all disputes with other member states before any accession. The disputes between Turkey and Greece and the Cyprus problem are important obstacles that Turkey must clear before gaining EU membership. The EU expects Turkey to make constructive contributions to the settlement of all disputes with neighboring countries by peaceful means.²⁰ Turkey's relations with Greece could be big problems in the structural form of the Union. These problems could prevent crucial policies from being implemented any time.

¹⁹ _____, Knocking on the Door, *The Economist*, 11 May 2000.

²⁰ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 8. Available online: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/dwn/report_10_99/en/word/turkey.doc]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

To date, the EU has adopted more than 100,000 pages of regulations and fundamental laws, which the candidates should accept and adopt as a whole to their legal system prior to accession.²¹ Furthermore, the EU has already established certain criteria and regulations for an enlargement program that candidates must meet. With the addition of the thirteen candidates awaiting their membership approval, the number of members will be twenty-eight. Developed at the 1993 Copenhagen Summit, the EU's membership requirements have been restated and made clearer in the enlargement plan, "Agenda 2000."

In July 1997, the Commission President Jacques Santer proposed Agenda 2000, which set the Commission's strategy to reform and enlarge the Union and suggested that accession negotiations begin with Central and Eastern European countries in 1998. The main objective of the Agenda 2000 plan was to prepare both the EU and candidates for a healthy unification. In the light of the Agenda 2000 package of reforms, the European Commission agreed upon the following issues at the EU summit in Berlin during March 1999 in addition to the other internal issues.²²

- One of the greater tasks for the EU is to heal the divisions of Europe and extend the same peace and prosperity to Central and Eastern European countries that current EU countries have.
- The Agenda 2000 reform package will also initiate the necessary reforms, including the reform of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Regional

²¹ Van Oudenaren, John, "EU Enlargement, Return to Europe," in Ronald Tiersky, *Europe Today*, p. 407.

²² EU Documents, Europe's Agenda 2000, Strengthening and widening the European Union, p. 3. Available online: [[http:// www. Europe.eu.int/comm/agenda2000/public_en.pdf](http://www.Europe.eu.int/comm/agenda2000/public_en.pdf)] Accessed on 22 November 2000.

Subsidies, to reshape the EU, so that it can ensure successful enlargement, and at the same time deliver better economic prospects for Europe's citizens.

The challenges for the EU are to negotiate enlargement with 13 more candidates that want to join, while at the same time prepare these for the moment of accession, and finance these preparations.²³ The Commission outlined a financial plan for years 2000-2006. The Commission tried to ensure that there would be enough money in the EU's budget to meet the costs of enlargement during this period, while also adopting the conservative approach to spending which the member states have agreed upon.

Under the Agenda 2000 plan, the EU has also made special concessions to help the agrarian sectors and rural economies of the candidate countries prepare for membership. The European Council of Berlin recently decided to double pre-accession aid from the year 2000, and to create two specific instruments, (1) the pre-accession structural instrument (ISPA), with a budget of euro 1,040 million a year from the year 2000, and (2) the pre-accession agricultural instrument (SAPARD) with a budget of euro 520 million a year. This plan will be deployed in priority fields such as the improvement of conversion structures, marketing channels and food quality control.²⁴

In Agenda 2000, the Commission proposed to focus on the program, which prepares the candidate countries for EU membership by giving financial support for institution building and investments, which are crucial for the countries to function well within the EU. For Turkey the EU proposes the increase of financial aid from 2000 on. These funds will be available for Turkey for structural reforms, institution building and

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ EU Documents, Enlargement Strategy Paper, Reports on Progress towards Accession by Each of the Candidate Country, p. 10, 10 November 2000. Available online:
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_11_00/strat_en.pdf] Accessed on 15 November 2000.

investment in the programs to bring Turkey in line with the EU regulations.²⁵ In addition to this a proposal for a euro 450 million European Investment Bank loan has been made available for Turkey by the European Commission to strengthen the Customs Union.²⁶

Agenda 2000 gives an evaluation of the economic and political situation of the candidates including Turkey. According to this document, Turkey should make a firm commitment to resolve a number of problems in the region, and contribute actively to a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus problem. The plan also implies that the European Union should continue to support Turkey's efforts to solve its economic and political problems, which have prevented its accession into the Union.²⁷

In the closing remarks of the Berlin Summit in March 1999, heads of the member states, referring to the Agenda 2000 plan, tried to assure the candidate countries that the enlargement remains a historic priority for European Union for creating a stronger, wider, more stable Europe. This would be a great achievement for 500 million citizens of what would be a 28-member European Union.²⁸

C. THE POLICIES AND PROBLEMS WITHIN THE EU PREVENTING AN EARLY ACCESSION OF TURKEY

1. The Economic Situation within the European Union

Although the overall economy of the EU seems to be doing well, certain countries have special concerns and problems that prevents any early accession of a country like Turkey with a huge population of 65 million, that is predominantly agricultural (see

²⁵ Ibid, p. 12.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1998, p. 6. Available online: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/dwn/report_11_98/en/word/turkey_en.doc] Accessed on 15 April 2000.

²⁸ EU Documents, Europe's Agenda 2000, Strengthening and Widening the European Union, p. 15.

Tables 3A and 3B on pages 80 and 81), and with substantially lower wages for its labor force.

Since the adoption of euro as a single currency in the EU, the euro has lost more than 30 percent against the US dollar in international markets. The euro's weakness has already pushed inflation above the European Central Bank's declared upper limit of 2 percent a year. Most of the inflationary pressure is resulting from surging oil prices. The euro's weakness has added a huge surcharge for Europe since oil is priced in US dollars. In Germany import prices have increased 13 percent in the last year and producer prices have increased.²⁹ The euro, which was regarded as a strong rival to the US dollar, has instead become a currency that has needed serious, large scale intervention from the US and European Central Bank. This situation has also revealed that Europe's economy is not as strong or attractive as the economy in the US.

Particularly Germany is opposing the early accession of not only Turkey, but also other candidates as well. Unification of East and West Germany brought a great amount of financial burden and social problems on West Germany. Since 1990, following the unification West Germany's net transfer of public money to East Germany, to pull the East to the level of West, is about 540 billion USD, and according to some estimates there is still a need of 300-400 billion to complete the unification process in 5-6 years.³⁰ The average unemployment rate in Germany is 10 percent, while it is more than 17 percent in East alone.

²⁹ Andrews, E., "Out on a Limb, Another Lift Effort to Lift the Euro," *The New York Times*, p. B2, 04 November 2000.

³⁰ _____, Togetherness, a Balance Sheet, *The Economist*, 30 September 2000.

2. Institutional Reforms

With 13 countries waiting to join the EU, everybody within the Union is in favor of reforming the institutions of the Union. But the problem is so big and tricky, that 15 current members are a long way from reaching an agreement. In a recent meeting in Biarritz in France in October 2000, a huge debate took place when French President Chirac demanded a new voting system, which gives large countries greater representation. But the smaller countries responded with opposition that they were not eager to sacrifice their voices on the European issues.³¹

One of the major issues is remaking the European Commission, the main decision making body, which is in charge of preparing policies and suggestions on the projects. Currently, there are 20 members in the Commission, one from each small 10 countries and 2 from each larger 5 countries. But with the enlargement, particularly with the entrance of Turkey, with a projected population of more than 70 million at the time of accession (year 2010-15), the number of members in the Commission would be more than 30 with the current structure. The problem with 30 bureaucrats would be the improbability of reaching an agreement for the improvement of the EU with every member pushing for his country's interests.

Another major problem is the number and type of decisions made through qualified majority and unanimous voting. Many pivotal issues like sovereignty, common taxation, foreign policy, defense and security issues, regional financial policies, immigration policies still require unanimous vote. It is quite apparent that it would be much harder to achieve unanimity with more and diversifying members, since even with 15 members reaching an agreement on fundamental changes is taking a long time and

³¹ _____, Make it Ten, Set a Date, *The Economist*, London, 8 June 2000.

severe discussions. But various countries are reluctant to give up their rights of veto on the issues that is directly related to their self-interests. For example Britain is very sensitive on the issues of common taxation and military affairs, Germany is concerned about immigration policies and France is slowly showing some concerns on the sovereignty issue.³²

3. Labor and Unemployment Inside the European Union and the Immigration Problem

The leading countries of the EU, both Germany and France have serious unemployment problems. The unemployment rate in France is 11 percent and in Germany 10.5 percent.³³ Both countries have a substantial amount of foreign workers within the labor force, and they are very sensitive to the immigration problem in Europe. The North African immigrants in France and Turks in Germany form the bulk of foreigners. However, any future membership of Turkey in the EU will grant unrestricted travel of people as well. At this point, Germany's position is more critical than that of other EU countries. The final outcome of a German policy on Turkey's entrance into the Union could possibly be affected by the presence of 2.5 million Turkish people in Germany.

The free movement of labor between Germany and Turkey is something most Germans do not even want to consider, given their already difficult relationship with their Turkish inhabitants.³⁴ If Turkish people get the free movement and working rights within the EU, obviously the biggest target country for Turks to immigrate to will be Germany.

³² _____, A French Lesson, *The Economist*, London, 29 June 2000.

³³ CIA-The World Factbook 2000-France, and Germany. Available online: [<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/fr.html>, and [geos/gm.html](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gm.html).] Accessed on 25 November 2000.

³⁴ Gordon, P.H., "Storms in the Med Blow towards Europe," *The World Today*, London, February 1998. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

German reluctance to bring Turkey too close to the EU is also motivated by German policy to preserve the EU as a potential political, economic and cultural federation, something that would become even less likely for Turkey to join.³⁵ Currently the governments of Germany and also Austria are very doubtful about the entry of new candidates, let alone Turkey, but also the first group of Eastern European countries.³⁶

4. The Common Agricultural Policy

One of the most difficult reforms within the EU's own structures seems to be in the area of farm subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which costs more than Euro 40 billion a year, almost equal to half of the EU budget, and regional subsidies or structural funds, which absorb another third.³⁷ In both policies, the Commission had proposed plans, known as Agenda 2000. The Commission wants to cut price guarantees for agricultural products to levels equal to the world average and shift public subsidies towards direct payments to farmers.

Currently, mainly the French Farmers and then Italian and other Southern European members' farmers benefit from the CAP. Prior to the CAP reform, no candidates with large agricultural populations and predominantly agricultural economies, (e.g., Poland and Turkey) would be able join the EU.

On the other hand, changes to structural funds could be more challenging to implement, because they require unanimous approval, whereas CAP changes do not. The Commission wants to reduce the percentage of EU members' population eligible for structural funds from 51 percent of the Union's population to 38 percent.³⁸ The

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ —, Knocking on the Door, *The Economist*, 11 May 2000.

³⁷ —, Slicing the EU's Shrinking Cake, *The Economist*, 19 March 2000.

³⁸ Ibid.

Commission proposes that two-thirds of the money for regional subsidies should go to poor regions, and the remainder to regions that have extremely high rates of unemployment or industrial decline. In that case too, Turkey would acquire a substantial amount of the funds with its high unemployment rate and backward industry.

Reforming structural funds appears to be necessary, but there will be definitely losers within the Union. To soften the effects of the reform, the Commission is proposing a transition period, which could last up to six years.³⁹

5. Priority of the Eastern European Countries

Turkey's top intellectuals regard the EU's decisions about Turkey as political and prejudiced with respect to other candidate countries. Turkish leaders argue that the qualifications of Turkey are much better than the Eastern European Countries. They perceive the EU's policy towards Eastern European countries as a double standard of the EU in dealing with membership issue of Turkey. Eastern European countries are invited in and the EU discusses whatever problems they have, and these problems are addressed jointly, with the EU's help.⁴⁰

After the collapse of Soviet Union, the European Union faced new problems. The biggest was the emerging conflicts and instability in Eastern Europe. Eastern European states, formerly satellites of the Soviet Union, began to replace their political and economical systems with western type democracy and market economy. The Eastern European states, emerging from the ruins of 45 years of domination of the Soviet rule,

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Bac, M. M., *The never-ending story: Turkey and the European Union*, para. 38, *Middle Eastern Studies*; London; Oct 1998. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

were in desperate situation because of their collapsed economy and uncertain political condition.⁴¹

The people of Eastern Europe and Baltic States consider themselves as the natural members of the bigger European family with their common cultural and traditional aspects.⁴² They are seeing the west as freedom, prosperity, and a better life. They are thinking that they, too, deserve better lives, freedom, and prosperity after too much suffering at the hands of imperialistic western and eastern powers. Indeed, at Essen, Germany, in December 1994 the elected members of the EU member states called enlargement to the East a, "moral obligation."⁴³ In fact, Vaclav Havel, the president of Czech Republic revealed his feelings in a speech that he addressed to the General Assembly of the Council on Europe on 9 October 1993, in Vienna, Austria, by stating that:

*Twice in this century all of Europe has paid a tragic price for the narrow-mindedness and lack of imagination of its democracies. These democracies first failed when confronted with Nazism... They failed a second time when they allowed Stalin to swallow up one half of our continent... There is a saying: 'Everything good and evil comes in threes.' Democratic Europe cannot afford a third failure.*⁴⁴

Again, on 15 May 1996, in Aachen, he once more expressed his views that:

It is true that united part of Europe would suffer if it expanded. On the contrary, in the long run, it would suffer only if it failed to expand ...I know neither the European Union nor the North Atlantic Alliance can open its doors overnight to all those who aspire to join them. What both most assuredly can do-and what they should do before it is too late-is to

⁴¹ Crampton, R.J. Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century and Ever After, p. 345, Library of Congress, 1997.

⁴² Milosz, C., Swing Shift in the Baltics, *The New York Review*, p. 12, 09 March 2000.

⁴³ Brewin, C., European Union perspectives on Cyprus accession, *Middle Eastern Studies*, London, January 2000. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>] Accessed on 22 August 2000.

⁴⁴ Havel, V., How Europe could Fail?, translated by Paul Wilson *The New York Review*, 18 November 1993.

*give the whole of Europe, seen as a sphere of common values, the clear assurance that they are not closed clubs.*⁴⁵

None of the EU members (especially Germany) want instability and conflicts in Europe. Such conflicts can directly affect the security and prosperity of the EU states. Moreover, the bulk of responsibility of the situation in Eastern Europe belongs to Germany and other major Western Europe countries like France and England because of their failure during World War I and World War II to stop the war, and after World War II, Soviet hegemony and communist rule in Eastern Europe. So with the leading policies of Germany, France and England the EU has placed its priorities on the Eastern European states. In that sense, acceptance of Turkey as full-fledged member of the EU seems to be on hold, at least until the first group of candidates' accessions.

⁴⁵ Havel, V., The Hope for Europe, translated by Alexandra Brabcova and Paul Wilson, *The New York Review*, p. 40, 20 June 1996.

III. THE MAIN OBSTACLES PREVENTING TURKEY'S FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

A. TURKEY'S SHORTCOMINGS THAT EVOLVE DIRECTLY FROM ITS DOMESTIC SITUATION

1. General Evolution

The majority of Turkish people and Turkish politicians think that Turkey has the necessary qualifications to join EU, and also believe that Turkey is making every possible effort to solve human rights problems, minority issues and democratization problems. According to Turkish government officials, Turkey has had a functioning democratic regime since 1923, and a market economy, that has the capacity to cope with EU regulations and improving civil society.⁴⁶ They also state that Turkish people have freedom of speech and thought regardless of ethnicity, and that Turkey respects human rights and protects minorities within the framework of Turkish legal structure.⁴⁷ Indeed, according to Edwin McBride, as he stated in his Survey on Turkey, "most Turks attribute their long wait for membership to harsh European racism, not to any failings of their own."⁴⁸

Turkish political leaders and top officials have always regarded the warnings and decisions of EU as unacceptable interventions in Turkey's domestic affairs. According to these officials, human rights, the Kurdish issue, political freedom and democratization problems are Turkey's domestic concerns and do not necessarily indicate the need for third-party intervention. However, in the EU part, such an organization, which is identified with its liberal democratic norms and rule of law, sees the intervention right in

⁴⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, EU review, Relations between Turkey and the European Union. Available online: [<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/adab/relations.htm>]. Accessed on 20 April 2000.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-Why are We Waiting?, *The Economist*, p.6, London, 10 June 2000.

itself to the domestic issues of the members that are not in line with the EU's regulations, as in the case of Austria. The Union refused the government partners, who were regarded as extreme rightist parties in Austria, and imposed diplomatic sanctions on the country.⁴⁹

The Turkish government also rejected the claims of the EU on the trial process of Mr. Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, or the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been conducting terrorist actions in Turkey since 1984. The government declared that the EU claims were intervention to Turkish domestic affairs and disrespectful to independent Turkish Judicial system.⁵⁰ In an interview with Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit in April 1999, Ecevit stated that the EU's preconditions for Turkey-an improvement of its human rights record, help in settling the Cyprus problem, and a deal with the Kurds- were just excuses for excluding Turkey. The real reason for him is that "... [the EU and its members] do not want a Muslim country in their midst".⁵¹

2. Democratization Process

The democratization process in Turkey is being monitored by the EU. In its explanatory memorandum on 8 October 2000, in Brussels, Belgium the European Commission proposed the following requirements to be met by Turkey in the medium term.⁵²

- Turkey should guarantee full enjoyment by all individuals without any discrimination and irrespective of their language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief or religion of all human rights

⁴⁹ Daley, S., European Union is moving to lift sanctions it imposed on Austria, *The New York Times*, 15 July 2000.

⁵⁰ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 6.

⁵¹ _____, Charlemagne: Bulent Ecevit, Turkey's survivor, *The Economist*, London, 24 April 1999.

⁵² EU Documents, The Commission of the European Communities, Explanatory Memorandum, 8 October 2000, Brussels.

and fundamental freedoms, and ensure cultural diversity and guarantee cultural rights for all citizens irrespective of their origin.

- Turkey should make necessary changes in its constitution to guarantee rights and freedoms of all Turkish citizens as set forth in the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights, and remove any legal provisions forbidding the use by Turkish citizens of their mother tongue in TV/radio broadcasting.
- Turkey should abolish the death penalty, sign and ratify Protocol N° 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights.
- Turkey should also align the constitutional role of the National Security Council as an advisory body to the government in accordance with the practice of EU member states.

In its 1998 Regular Report on Turkey's progress towards accession, the

Commission also concluded that:

*On the political side, the evaluation highlights certain anomalies in the functioning of the public authorities, persistent human rights violations and major shortcomings in the treatment of minorities. The lack of civilian control of the army gives cause for concern. This is reflected by the major role played by the army in political life through the National Security Council.*⁵³

As reflected in the Commission's 1998 report, Turkey has some serious problems with its democratization process with regard to the EU standards. In many documents and statements the major concerns generally focus on the following areas: restrictions on freedom of speech, problems related to the Constitution and political parties, human rights abuses, restrictions on the political and cultural rights of Kurdish origin citizens and related to this the PKK terror organization and the Kurdish dilemma, rise of political Islam and related to this the restrictions on religious affairs, high level influence of the Turkish Military in political and state affairs, and weak and unresponsive civil society. Given the circumstances, according to Turkish political and military leaders, Turkey is left to choose between adopting necessary regulations to grant a more democratic and

⁵³ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1998, p. 22.

free Turkey that meets the EU criteria for a democratized state or experiencing an ethnic and political conflict, including the possible disintegration of the unitary state by separatist actions and the instability caused by radical Islamic movements.⁵⁴

a. Restrictions on Freedom of Speech

Limits on freedom of speech and the press pose a serious problem in Turkey for the democratization process. According to the Turkish Constitution, there should be freedom of speech and freedom of the press in the country. However, the Turkish government is reportedly continuing to limit these freedoms.⁵⁵ The Turkish Constitution reserves the right to such restrictions on these freedoms on the basis of national security-related considerations. Police and the courts have continued to limit freedom of expression by citing laws in the 1982 Constitution as well as other laws, including the 1991 Anti-Terror Law, which strictly forbids separatist propaganda, Article 159 of the Criminal Code, that refers to laws prohibiting criticism of the Parliament, the army, Republic, or judiciary, Article 160 which prohibits condemnation of the Turkish Republic, Article 169 prohibits aiding an illegal organization, Article 312 in reference to the incitement to racial, ethnic or religious enmity, the Law to Protect Ataturk,⁵⁶ and Article 16 of the Press Law.⁵⁷

In 1999, Turkish Parliament passed two new laws, on combating criminal organizations and on prosecuting civil servants. These new laws contain provisions allowing prosecutions for certain types of speech. Parliament in August 1999, also passed

⁵⁴ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey- Last Line of Defense and Why are We Waiting?, *The Economist*, p. 6.

⁵⁵ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 2, 25 February 2000. Available online: [http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/turkey.html]. Accessed on 17 July 2000.

⁵⁶ In current Turkish legal system, there is a law, which restricts citizens from criticizing and insulting Ataturk and his reforms in public.

⁵⁷ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 2.

a law suspending for 3 years the sentences of writers and journalists convicted of crimes involving freedom of expression through the media. By the end of the year, at least 25 journalists, authors, or political party officials who had published articles were released, and hundreds more had their trials halted.⁵⁸ However, they could be sent back to jail if they commit a similar crime within a 3-year period. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that at least 18 journalists remained imprisoned by the end of 1999, compared with 25 in 1998.⁵⁹

The Turkish Constitution does not allow political parties based on class, religion, ethnicity or separatism. During the 1990's, the Constitutional Court demanded the closure of three pro-Kurdish parties and one pro-Islamist political party. Another pro-Islamist party, the Virtue Party (the successor of the previously banned pro-Islamist Welfare Party) is currently under investigation by the Constitutional Court.⁶⁰ The government, in an attempt to reform the Political Parties' Act, adopted yet another new law in August 1999, which made the closure of political parties more difficult.⁶¹

Some members of the country's political elite, bureaucracy, military, and judiciary claim that the state is threatened by both fundamental Islamist action and separatist Kurdish movement. Such groups continue to call for concrete steps to be taken that would entail limits on, freedom of expression, in order to address these threats. As a result of these measures, the leader of Welfare Party Necmettin Erbakan, and former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, another prominent Islamist political leader,

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Bac, M. M., The impact of the European Union on Turkish politics, para. 19, *East European Quarterly*, Boulder; Summer 2000. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>.] Accessed on 22 August 2000.

⁶¹ Ibid.

were banned from politics because of their statements which were regarded as promoting religious enmity and threatening the unity of the state. Tayyip Erdogan, who had quoted a poem of Ziya Gokalp, a famous ideologue of Turkish nationalism at the disintegration period of the Ottoman Empire, was released after serving more than 4 months of a 10-month sentence for this conviction.⁶²

The media's situation in Turkey is somewhat better in terms of free press regulations and reaching the mass population. During the last decade, the electronic media in Turkey has developed considerably, and now reaches almost every corner of Turkey, and their influence, particularly that of television, is high.⁶³ According to the Government's Directorate General of Press and Information, in addition to the state-owned Turkish Radio and Television Corporation, there are 230 local, 15 regional, and 20 national private television stations. Additionally, there are 1,044 local, 108 regional, and 36 national radio stations in Turkey.⁶⁴

The increasing availability of satellite dishes and cable television makes it possible to access foreign broadcasts, including several Turkish-language private channels. Internet use is growing, and faces no government restrictions; in fact, some banned newspapers and the web sites of PKK and several of its branches can be accessed freely on the Internet and government censorship of foreign periodicals is very rare.⁶⁵

The law, which regulates broadcasting in Turkey, makes it illegal for broadcasters to threaten the country's unity or national security, and limits the private broadcast of television programs in languages other than Turkish. The High Board of

⁶² Kramer, H., *A Changing Turkey, The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, p. 32, Washington DC. Brooking Institution Press, 2000.

⁶³ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey- Multiple Choice, *The Economist*, p.18.

⁶⁴ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 24.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 23.

Radio and Television (RTUK), created in 1994 to regulate private television and radio frequencies, monitors broadcasters, and occasionally shuts them down if they are not in compliance with relevant laws. Nevertheless, despite the Government's restrictions, the media criticizes government leaders and policies daily. Lively debates on human rights and government policies were stimulated by several events, including President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's (then Constitutional Court President) call in March 1999 to lift restrictions on freedom of expression, including restrictions on language rights.⁶⁶

To reach a more functional democracy and freedom of speech, Turkey should revise the criminal laws that talk about crimes against state to ensure the freedom of speech and freedom of press. Given the democratic requirements and to ensure freedom of speech, the difference between legitimate political speech or criticism of government and threats to the unity of the state should be clearly examined and recognized. As Gunduz Aktan, former Ambassador to Greece and Japan, explains, Turkey needs to separate violence and threats to the unity and stability of the state from legitimate free speech for real democracy.⁶⁷

b. Problems Related to the Constitution and Political Parties

After Turgut Ozal, who died in 1993, none of the Turkish political parties managed to build a powerful and stable government. Turkey mostly suffered from a series of weak, short-lived and corrupt governments. Although the primary culprit for this goes to the electoral system, political parties have also failed to provide an uncorrupt political environment and promising valuable policies to their voters.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 25.

⁶⁷ Frantz, D., As Former Leader Faces Jail, Turks Rethink Limits on Speech, *The New York Times*; New York, N.Y., 11 July 2000. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

Eventhough the electoral system foresees a bar of 10 percent votes for parties nationwide, the distribution of the votes, and consequently the seats in the parliament did not permit any single party to form the government until now (see election results in Table 7 on page 85). Even two party coalitions were a distant target in the political structure of Turkey.

In some cases, ideologically very diverse parties formed coalition governments in order to save their leading cadre from prosecution for corruption. The coalition government formed by True Path party and then the Welfare party is an ironic example of such a coalition government in Turkey. The leader of the True Path Party, Tansu Ciller, had declared before 1995 elections that if her party would not succeed, then the pro-Islamist Welfare Party would capture the government, and she titled Welfare Party as the enemy of the state. Moreover, Ciller declared that she would never form a coalition with Welfare's leader Necmettin Erbakan.⁶⁸ However, the outcome was the reverse. To protect her head from corruption scandals and investigations about spending state money in an unauthorized way, Tansu Ciller formed a coalition government with Erbakan.

The lack of internal democracy within the political parties is another major concern. Almost all of the political parties in Turkey are under direct control of their leaders. They have an absolute power on decision-making process and in nominating the candidates for Parliament from their parties. As stated in a survey about Turkey in *The Economist* in June 2000, "The leaders are the emperors of their parties. They can

⁶⁸ Bac, M. M., *The never-ending story: Turkey and the European Union*, para. 32.

summarily dismiss members, have absolute control over the all important party lists at elections, and never seem to retire.”⁶⁹

However, some new faces are emerging in the political arena of Turkey. The President Ahmet Necdet Sezer is one of them. He succeeded 76 years old Suleyman Demirel in May 2000 as a 59 years old President. The opinion polls say that, for the first time in Turkey’s 77 years as a republic, the president now wins more trust than the Military, which has always topped the poll.⁷⁰ Mr. Sezer called on parliament to enact wide-ranging constitutional and democratic reforms and to uphold the supremacy of law. He stated, “Such changes should be carried out not because the EU wants them but because these are changes that our people deserve.”⁷¹

The other new leader in Turkish politics is Devlet Bahceli, the head of the National Action Party, which is also a partner in current government. Mr. Bahceli is trying to shift his party towards the center and make it more acceptable to the middle class Turks.⁷² He eagerly agreed on many crucial issues including the suspension of Ocalan’s death sentence until the decision of European Court of Justice. He even reversed the old conservative attitude of party on ban of Islamic headscarves in government schools and state offices by stating that the ban should be kept in its place. The flexibility of Mr. Bahceli in such major issues resulted in that the oddly formed government, center left and far right, has been much more successful than expected. Today, Mr. Bahceli and his party became more respectable in most public eyes.

⁶⁹ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-Last line of defense, *The Economist*; p. 14.

⁷⁰ _____, Charlemagne, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, a Westward-Looking Turk, *The Economist*, 07 December 2000.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² _____, Charlemagne, Devlet Bahceli, Turkey’s Latest Political Pivot, *The Economist*, October 12, 2000.

Even in the pro-Islamist Virtue Party some changes are taking place. After Erbakan, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul are gaining great popularity within the party with respect to the 70 years old Recai Kutan, current leader of the Virtue Party.⁷³ Several factors helped Mr. Gul and Mr. Erdogan in gaining popularity. Although they too want religion to play a bigger part in Turkish life, and argue in favor of letting women wear Islamic-style headscarves in state schools and government offices, they sounded more democratic with respect to Erbakan and current party leaders and they also back Turkey's application to join the EU.⁷⁴

c. Human Rights Abuses

The Turkish Constitution prohibits torture; however, the security forces continue to torture, beat, and otherwise abuse persons in custody and during interrogations.⁷⁵ Despite the Government's cooperation with unscheduled foreign inspection teams, public pledges by successive governments to end the practice, and new government initiatives designed to address the problem, torture continues to be widespread.⁷⁶ Human rights attorneys and physicians who treat victims of torture say that most persons detained on suspicion of having committed political crimes usually suffer some torture at the hands of police and gendarme during periods of interrogation before they are brought before a court. Ordinary criminal suspects also report frequent torture and mistreatment by police.⁷⁷

⁷³ _____, New Blood?, *The Economist*, 18 May 2000.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 12.

⁷⁶ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, pp. 11-13.

⁷⁷ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 12.

Government officials admit that torture occurs, but deny that it is systematic.⁷⁸ However, many of the human rights abuses are related to the state's campaign with the PKK. Indeed, much of the reported abuses occur in the southeastern part of the country.⁷⁹

The current government adopted a series of initiatives during the last year designed to improve human rights conditions. They included: removing military judges from the State Security Courts; increasing maximum, although not minimum, sentences for torture or for falsifying a medical record to hide torture; calling for prosecutors to make unscheduled inspections of detention sites; making it more difficult to close political parties; suspending for 3 years the sentences or court cases of dozens of journalists and writers, provided they do not commit a similar offense; imposing a time limit on supervisors to decide whether civil servants, including security forces, can be prosecuted; and allowing prosecutors to begin immediately collecting evidence of alleged abuse by security officials.

Moreover, several advocates reported a reduction in the number of torture victims in the southeast during the year. They attribute the decrease to fewer detentions; reduced PKK violence, which has eased treatment by security officials; better-educated security officers; and increased concern about the problem from many sources.

The question of death penalty has recently been a major subject of debate in Turkey, as well as in the EU, in connection with the Öcalan trial. Although Turkey has not carried out any executions since 1984, the EU wants Turkey to abolish the death penalty in aligning Turkey's criminal legislation with the EU's.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 11.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

d. *PKK Terror Organization and the Kurdish Dilemma*

Another aspect of the rise of radicalism in Turkey is related to the Kurdish separatist movement. The government's capabilities in handling the Kurdish issue constitute a testing ground for judging its commitment to democratization, since human rights violations occurred in mostly Kurdish populated areas. In Turkey, there is an estimated population of about 12-15 million people of Kurdish origin constituting about one-sixth of Turkey's population.⁸⁰ Problems basically revolve around the recognition of the separate cultural identity of the Kurdish population and the use of the Kurdish language. The Kurdish separatist action surfaced itself by the establishment of the PKK, led by Abdullah Ocalan, which began its separatist activities in Southeast Turkey in 1984. The Turkish government views the problem as a domestic conflict. Similarly, the Turkish military's position is that the PKK is a separatist terrorist organization that has to be smashed militarily.

For over 15 years, the Government has engaged in an armed conflict with the terrorist PKK, whose original goal was the formation of a separate Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey. Since 1984, the PKK has waged a violent terrorist insurgency in southeast Turkey, directed against both security forces and civilians (mainly Kurds whom the PKK accused of cooperating with the state).⁸¹ The police, the Gendarme, village guards, and the armed forces in turn have waged an intense campaign to suppress PKK terrorism, targeting active PKK units as well as persons whom they believe support or sympathize with the PKK. In the process, both government forces and PKK terrorists committed human rights abuses against each other and against civilians. According to the

⁸⁰ _____, *The Kurds, an Ancient Tragedy*, *The Economist*, p. 50, London, 20 February 2000.

⁸¹ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 23.

documents of Governorship to the State of Emergency Legislation in South East Turkey, since 1987, 23,342 PKK members, 5,021 security force members, 307 government employed civilians, and 4,447 civilians lost their lives in the fighting (see Table 8 on page 86).⁸²

A state of emergency, declared in 1987, continues in five southeastern provinces that have experienced substantial PKK terrorist violence. Under the state of emergency, the regional governor may exercise certain quasi-martial law powers, including imposing restrictions on the press, removing from the area persons whose activities are deemed detrimental to public order, and ordering village evacuations. In an effort to deny the PKK logistical support, the government displaced more than 500 000 people from villages in the southeast since 1984. The Turkish government has reported that by 1999, the total number of those evacuated was 362,915 persons, from 3,236 villages and hamlets, of whom 26,481 have been resettled with government assistance in 176 villages and hamlets. Another 61,987 have applied to return.⁸³ The financial burden of the campaign to Turkey has been about 8 billion annually.⁸⁴

Turkey has not signed the Council of Europe Framework for the Protection of National Minorities, and the Turkish Constitution does not recognize the Kurds as a national, racial, or ethnic minority. Eventhough this group constitutes the country's largest ethnic and linguistic group in Turkey, the Kurds were denied the right to use the Kurdish language in election campaigning, education, broadcasting, and in some cultural activities, such as weddings. However, the argument that the Kurds are denied

⁸² Statistical Documents on Fighting with PKK, Governorship to the State of Emergency Legislation in Southeast Turkey. Available online: [http://www.ohal.gov.tr/f_tarihce.htm.] Accessed on 25 September 2000.

⁸³ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 24.

⁸⁴ McBride, Edward, Survey: Turkey, Multiple Choice, *The Economist*; p.18.

their language, cultural identity and democratic rights in any form is not exactly true.⁸⁵ There are no legal barriers to Kurds' participation in political and economic affairs, and many members of Parliament, senior officials and professionals are Kurds. However, Kurds who publicly or politically assert their Kurdish identity or publicly espouse the use of Kurdish language in a public domain risk public censure, harassment, or prosecution.⁸⁶

Printed material in Kurdish is legal. However, the police continue to interfere with the distribution of some newspapers, and the governor of the emergency region banned some Kurdish-language newspapers in that mainly Kurdish-speaking area. Kurdish music recordings are widely available, but bans on certain songs and singers persist. Radio and television broadcasts in Kurdish are illegal, and in practice rarely occur. Some radio stations, especially in the southeast, play Kurdish music. The Government's broadcast monitoring agency mostly tolerates this practice but has closed down some stations for playing politically oriented, banned Kurdish music.

However, the government might abolish the bans on broadcasting in Kurdish in the near future. The issue is in public debate through 1990s. A recent declaration of Senkal Atasagun, the head of Turkey's intelligence agency, proposed that Turkey should not execute Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan and the ban on domestic Kurdish-language broadcast should be lifted is a sign of changing policy on the issue. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit has also supported Atasagun's statement.⁸⁷

In February 1999, the Government captured PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. In June he was tried in a State Security Court on the charge of treason by trying to

⁸⁵ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-, So Where is Kurdistan?, *The Economist*, p.10.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ From the Associated Press news, Turkey may Allow Kurdish Broadcast, *The New York Times*, 28 November 2000.

separate part of the country from government control and was sentenced to death. After his capture and trial, Ocalan called for PKK members to leave Turkey and commit themselves to a peaceful resolution of the Kurdish problem. In August 1999, Parliament passed legislation allowing members of terrorist organizations and criminal gangs to apply over a 6-month period for amnesty or reductions in sentences, as long as they provide useful information that helps lead to the dissolution of the organization.⁸⁸

Almost half of the Kurdish originated citizens of Turkey live in the western part of Turkey, particularly in the big cities such as Istanbul, and Ankara and other industrial cities. Millions of these Kurds are somewhat integrated to the other population and seem to be prosperous and happy.⁸⁹ There are many successful businessmen, politicians, bureaucrats, soldiers and even former President Turgut Ozal identified himself somewhat related to Kurds. Individuals who were openly identifying themselves at least partly Kurdish, have served as the Mayor of Istanbul, Prime Minister, even Chief of Military Staff.

The other point worth addressing with the Kurds in the western part of Turkey is that they provide little or no support for pro-Kurdish political parties. For example, the People's Democracy Party (HADEP), the largest Kurdish political party received only 4.7 percent of the total votes in the last 1999 parliamentary elections (see Table 7 on page 85). If we consider the 12-15 million Kurdish population, almost 15 percent of total population, the support is really weak for HADEP. However, in

⁸⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, EU review, Relations between Turkey and the European Union. Available online: [<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/adc/candidacy.htm>]. Accessed on 15 March 2000.

⁸⁹ McBride, Edward, Survey: Turkey- So Where is Kurdistan, *The Economist*, p. 10.

southeastern part of Turkey, where the percentage of the Kurds is higher, HADEP got 40-60 percent of the votes locally.⁹⁰

While the EU is criticizing Turkey for its bad treatment of citizens of Kurdish origin, the Union is also fully upholding the territorial integrity of Turkey. The EU reiterates its condemnation of all forms of terrorism, but at the same time, expects Turkey to resolve its problems by political means with full respect for human rights, the rule of law in a democratic society and in full accordance with Turkey's commitments as a member of the Council of Europe.⁹¹

e. Freedom of Religion and Fundamentalist Islamist Movement

As a pre-dominantly Muslim country, 99 percent of the population in Turkey is Muslim, primarily Sunni.⁹² In addition to the country's Sunni majority, an estimated 12 million Alawis (an offshoot of Shi'a Islam) freely practice their faith and build "Cem Houses" (Alawi places of worship).⁹³ The state supervises the religious education in public and private schools, pays the salaries of imams (government appointed official prayers in mosques) and other official religious clerics, and appoints suitable candidates for the mosques and other religious public assignments. The state also generates state funds for the mosque building as in the case of Kocatepe Mosque.⁹⁴ However, in accordance with a law amended in 1997, 8 years of secular education became compulsory, and new enrollments in the first 8 years of the Islamic Imam-Hatip schools (in existence since 1950) were stopped, although children already in those classes

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 6.

⁹² CIA-The World Factbook 2000 –Turkey. Available online:

[<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tu.html>]. Accessed on 25 September 2000.

⁹³ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 31.

⁹⁴ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey- Fundamental Separation, *The Economist*, p.12.

were allowed to finish their grades. The Imam-Hatip schools were very popular among conservative and Islamist Turks as an alternative to secular public education. The parents were able to enroll their children after primary school at the age of 11 (which is regarded by the Islamist groups as a very suitable age to train in religious affairs). Now, under current law, students may pursue study at Imam-Hatip "high schools" upon completion of 8 years of compulsory education in the secular public schools. Students who complete primary school may study the Koran in government-sponsored schools. The Government does not permit private Koran classes.

The Constitution establishes Turkey as a secular state, and provides for freedom of belief, freedom of worship, and the private dissemination of religious ideas. The government generally honors these tenants in practice; however, it has imposed some restrictions on religious minorities and on religious expression in government offices and state-run institutions, including universities.⁹⁵ Several human rights monitors and members of the pro-Islamist Virtue Party have complained that the government has stepped up enforcement of a 50-year-old ban on the wearing of religious head garments in government offices and other state-run facilities, by stating that wearing head scarves in public buildings is against the law. Hundreds of women who wear head coverings have lost their jobs in the public sector as nurses and teachers. During 1999, 312 teachers, including 180 student teachers, lost their jobs for wearing head coverings.⁹⁶ This attitude of government imposing restrictions on religious affairs is a EU concern regarding Turkey's democratization process.

⁹⁵ US Department of State, 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Turkey, p. 31.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 32.

The case of Merve Kavakci, a newly elected Member of Parliament from the Virtue Party who sought unsuccessfully to be sworn in to Parliament on May 2, 1999, wearing an Islamist-style headscarf, highlighted the continuing dispute over the ban on religious-style clothing in official settings. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, President Demirel, and the National Security Council criticized her actions as a challenge to the secular state. The mainstream press was also critical, but the Islamist-oriented media defended her actions. The personal controversy over Kavakci's right to wear a headscarf in Parliament became largely moot after Kavakci was stripped of Turkish citizenship for failing to notify authorities that she had acquired a foreign nationality.⁹⁷ Another aspect of the Kavakci incident was that many scholars and politician stated that the Merve Kavakci incident was planned by Erbakan, and accused Erbakan by stating that he was the man pulling the strings behind Merve Kavakci.⁹⁸

f. The Role of the Turkish Military in Political Issues and State Affairs

One of the biggest concerns the EU cites about Turkey is the military's powerful influence on political affairs. The role of Turkish military in political affairs shows that the Turkish military is not operating according to the tenants of democracy as defined by the EU. The role of the Turkish military in politics of Turkey is an important obstacle to the process of democratization in Turkey. The Turkish military acts as the 'guardian' of the reforms of Ataturk and Turkey.⁹⁹ Therefore any threat to these two

⁹⁷ _____, Bare your head, *The Economist*, 13 May 2000. (According to Turkish regulations, if somebody wants to acquire another state's nationality while keeping Turkish nationality, he/she should notify the Interior Minister citizenship department prior to the acceptance to the other nationality.)

⁹⁸ Sazak D., FP'nin sonu mu? (End of the Virtue Party?) *Milliyet* (A daily Turkish Newspaper): 08 May 1999, and _____, Hoca gölgesi kalkmıyor (Erbakan's Shadow persists over the Virtue Party) *Milliyet*, 06 Mayıs 1999. Available online [<http://www.miliet.com>]. Accessed on 16 October 2000.

⁹⁹ Bac, M. M., The never-ending story: Turkey and the European Union, para. 19.

meets with severe reaction and criticism from the military. It is in this context that military opposes the rise of political Islam and the separatist actions of PKK as well, since the military leaders perceive that the political Islam threatens the secular basis of state and the Kurdish action threatens the integrity of the country.

The active role of the military in politics gets its roots from historical events. Most reform and modernization movements in the late Ottoman period and during the early years of the Turkish Republic came by the hands of military. During the last decade of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish military assumed an even greater role in Turkish politics with the Young Turk Revolution in 1908.¹⁰⁰ Despite the ideas of Mustafa Kemal, who urged that military must stay out of politics, the Young Turk leaders did not follow his advice.¹⁰¹

In fact, Mustafa Kemal was a successful soldier, and he and some of his close friends from the Turkish Military formed the Republican Peoples' Party, which was the single political party of Turkey until 1946.¹⁰² Mustafa Kemal, however, insisted that they all make a clear choice between military and political affairs. Ataturk's main reforms aimed at the westernization of Turkey as a whole. Secularism became the corner stone of the Republic. But after the introducing of multi-party system in 1946, the political parties and politicians usually failed to form adequate civil consensus among themselves to create solutions to serious problems. First in 1960, later 1972, and 1980 military became more active to create political decisions to preserve the republic and its

¹⁰⁰ Huntington, S. P. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. p. 256, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Mango, A., *Ataturk, The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*, pp. 232-240, Woodstock and New York, The Overlook Press, 1999.

founding principles, and intervened to 'clean up the mess,' which politicians made, as Meltem Muftuler Bac describes it.¹⁰³

The role of the Turkish military in political affairs was based in part on Turkey's need for skilled, educated, modern politicians (who then mainly come from military ranks) since only the military had qualified candidates.¹⁰⁴ Since the introduction of the multi party system in 1946, the Turkish military intervened on three occasions and took control of the government in a military coup. In each case, the military commanders justified intervention based on the existence of an internal conflict, which threatened the security and the stability of the state, and the lack of political consensus within the parliament to solve the immediate crisis.¹⁰⁵

The last military intervention in 1980 also came as a result of intense domestic conflict. The responses of the outside world to that intervention were generally positive, except for some moderate concerns in Europe.¹⁰⁶ In the US, the first reaction to the intervention was positive. The US National Security Council advisor and head of the Turkish desk Paul Henze stated that the intervention was necessary to save Turkey, the weak link of NATO, from chaos in time.¹⁰⁷ He also stated that the intervention was in the United States' interests. The intervention was accepted by the Western world as a necessary measure to preserve stability in an important geo-political region.¹⁰⁸

The current problem is no longer the danger of a possible military coup, but the omnipresent role of the military in civilian politics. Turkish Chief of Staff's

¹⁰³ Bac, M. M., *The Never Ending Story: Turkey and European Union*, para. 18-20.

¹⁰⁴ Huntington, S. P., *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 258.

¹⁰⁵ Bac, M. M., *The Never Ending Story: Turkey and European Union*, para. 19.

¹⁰⁶ Birand, M. A., *The Generals Coup in Turkey: An Inside Story of 12 September 1980*, p. 185, London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1987.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 196.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 197.

declaration before the 1995 General elections that "the Turkish Armed Forces are the most effective guarantor of the Turkish Republic which is a secular, social and lawful state," succinctly clarifies the military's position in Turkey.¹⁰⁹

The EU opposes this omnipotent military presence in politics and cites it as concrete proof that Turkish democracy is far behind the European standard.¹¹⁰ However, most Turks rate the Military Forces as the countries most popular institution by stating that it is about the only thing in the country that works.¹¹¹

In its last two country reports on Turkey, the European Commission pointed out that the lack of civilian control of the Turkish Military is a major concern about the democratic system of Turkey. The report stated two main points as disturbing anomalies amended in the constitution. The first is the National Security Council (NSC), half of whose members are military commanders, including the Chief of Military Staff. The second, the Chief of Military Staff reports directly to the Prime Minister (not to the defense minister, as in the western countries). In Turkey, the power of the military through the NSC indicates that the military is in a position of highest command. For example, on 28 February 1997, during an NSC meeting, the military members were adamant about reforming the education system, and asked the government to implement educational reforms. The NSC announced on March 1, 1997, that it expected the government to take measures to strengthen secularism, and that failure to do so might result in military intervention. The inability of the government in power (the coalition

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 8.

¹¹¹ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-Last line of Defence, *The Economist*, p. 13.

between the True Path Party and Welfare Party) to pass educational reform became one of the factors that led to its downfall in June 1997.¹¹²

The solution to both issues will require a stable political environment in which the government can effectively deal with the country's problems, and skilled, professional politicians hold offices. Until now, military's position has been that the nation and its survival in the Kemalist sense, which means democratic, secular, modern and unitary, is of indisputable importance, and can not be left to the politicians who have frequently proved their incompetence in fulfilling their national duties.¹¹³ The promising point is that the Turkish military wants to participate in the EU's newly emerging "security and defense identity," so the military will have to adjust itself to the EU norms along with the other institutions of the state.

3. Turkish Economy

In Copenhagen, Denmark, in June 1993, the European Council stated that membership in the Union requires the existence of a functioning market economy, and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.¹¹⁴ With the introduction of a market economy by Turgut Ozal, former Prime Minister and President of Turkey, the structure of Turkish economy transformed into a competitive, dynamic body.¹¹⁵ As set out in Agenda 2000, the existence of a functioning market economy requires that prices, as well as trade, be liberalized and that an enforceable legal system, including property rights, be in place.¹¹⁶ The EU wants Turkey to commit itself to the implementation of the deflation and structural reform program agreed with the IMF

¹¹² Bac, M. M., *The never ending Story: Turkey and the European Union*, para. 19.

¹¹³ Kramer, H., p. 32.

¹¹⁴ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 17.

¹¹⁵ McBride, Edward, Survey: Turkey-Fingers Crossed, *The Economist*; p. 16.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 22.

and the World Bank, and in particular, ensure control of public spending. The Union also points out the necessity of implementing the financial sector reform, aiming at guaranteeing transparency and surveillance.¹¹⁷

After years of frequently changing governments, the parliamentary election in April 1999 resulted in the formation of a coalition government with a comfortable parliamentary majority in Turkey. Under Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, this coalition government seems to be strongly committed to tackle overdue structural reforms and to bring down the chronic high levels of inflation and public deficits paralyzing the Turkish economy during most of the 1990's (see Table 3B on page 81).¹¹⁸ By early July 1999, the new government had already reached a further agreement with the IMF on a staff monitored program, and a consolidation program starting in the year 2000, with the goal of lowering inflation to single digit numbers by 2002.¹¹⁹

During 2000, after a period of economic slowdown in growth rates (due in part to the Russian crisis and the earthquake in August 1999), the Turkish economy is recovering from the sharp recession of 1999 (See Table 3A on page 80). Economic growth has resumed in 2000, mainly because of increasing domestic demand for industrial products, particularly in the automotive sector. The decline in interest rates has also contributed to the increasing demand.¹²⁰

After decades of attempts to use its own enterprises to modernize and diversify the Turkish economy, the state still plays an important role as an economic agent,

¹¹⁷ EU Documents, The Commission of the European Communities, Explanatory Memorandum, 8 October 2000, Brussels.

¹¹⁸ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-Shifting Coalitions, and Fingers Crossed, *The Economist*; pp. 14-17.

¹¹⁹ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 22.

¹²⁰ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 2000. Available online: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/dwn/report_11_00/word/en/tu_en.doc]. Accessed on 21 November 2000.

especially in sectors like basic industries and banking. The legal framework for the working of a market economy is largely in place. The new government has also brought through parliament a change to the constitution, in order to allow for international arbitration. This measure facilitates privatization of enterprises in the energy, telecommunications and infrastructure sector and removes a considerable incentive for foreign direct investment, which until now is still very low in view of the economy's size and potential.

Small family companies are forming the main dynamic body of the Turkish private sector. In the manufacturing sector they account a great part of the total number of enterprises, employ about 61.1 percent of total employment and generate 27.3 percent of value added.¹²¹ These companies demonstrated a high degree of flexibility and adaptability to new situations, but their competitiveness in a bigger market is limited as their access to the Turkish capital market is restricted and their management and administrative skills are not up to modern standards.¹²²

The current unemployment rate in Turkey is about 7.3 percent; it was 6.3 percent in 1998, as compared to 6.4 percent in 1997, (and an underemployment rate of 7 percent should to be added to unemployment rates) according to official figures (see Table 4 on page 82).¹²³ It should be noted that no unemployment insurance system exists in Turkey at the present, although with the adoption of the Social Security Bill in 1999, an unemployment insurance scheme is to be introduced during year 2000.¹²⁴

¹²¹ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p.25.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ CIA World Factbook -Turkey 2000.

¹²⁴ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 1999, p. 38.

The high birth rate, 18.7 per 1000, and low productivity in Turkey contribute to a low GDP per capita of Dollars 5,015 (see Tables 2 and 3A on pages 79 and 80).

Purchasing power is at one-fourth of the Union average. Turkey's population of 65 million, with the exception of Poland, is almost equal to the total population of all the candidates (see Tables 1 and 2 on pages 78 and 79). Should Turkey become a member in the EU, the huge amount of unemployed and under employed people in Turkey would fill the workstations of Europe. Germany, particularly, has great reservations about this issue, since nearly 2,5 million Turkish people live there.

According to 1999 EU Regular Report on candidates' progress towards accession, Turkey has made considerable progress in dealing with the most urgent imbalances in the economy, in achieving macroeconomic stability, especially in reducing inflationary pressures and public deficits.¹²⁵ However, the process of achieving a smoothly functioning market economy is not completed, as there are still considerable areas of state dominance and market distortions-- especially in agriculture and the financial sector.¹²⁶ The Turkish economy has not yet reached a sufficient degree of stability to allow for medium-term planning of economic agents. Recent financial crisis, which pushed up the interest rates to over 100 percents in one day in banking sector, is the result of imbalances in the economy.¹²⁷

In order to support and safeguard macroeconomic stabilization, the government launched a reform program that creates some important structural reforms to be implemented over the next three years. The coalition government has maintained a well-

¹²⁵ Ibid, 22.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 28.

¹²⁷ _____, The Crisis in Turkey, *The Economist*, 05 December 2000.

balanced harmony particularly in dealing with economical issues.¹²⁸ The reform program involves all key areas including public finances, public administration, the privatization of state owned enterprises, the banking and the agricultural sector and the social security system.¹²⁹

With respect to the EU standards, the huge but less productive agricultural sector also needs to be reformed immediately with the privatization of state owned entities. The agricultural sector in Turkey forms 40 percent of total labor capacity, but contributes only 14 percent of GDP (see Tables 3A and 4 on pages 80 and 82). The government's new approach has been to reduce support prices in line with the inflation target, and to end subsidized credits to the agricultural sector. With respect to financial sector reform, the legislative framework has been set and the Bank Regulatory and Supervisory Board has been established, but the privatization of four state-controlled banks, forming the 40 percent of total assets are not completed yet.

With the EU's current regulations in CAP and regional subsidies, Turkey would become a large burden, a burden that would be more than the EU could absorb easily.¹³⁰ So far, the Union is already trying to reform CAP and regional subsidies. By decreasing the share of CAP and regional subsidies in the Union's total budget, the EU is trying to make it easier for the Union to absorb the new members.

As a non-member state with a Customs Union Agreement with the EU, Turkey's trade integration with the Union is considerably high. The major economic effect of the Customs Union has been a redirection of Turkey's imports from third-countries towards

¹²⁸ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 2000, p. 22.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 23.

¹³⁰ _____, Slicing the EU's Shrinking Cake, *The Economist*, 19 March 2000.

the EU. The trade volume between Turkey and the EU is continuously increasing (see Table 5 on page 83). Current amount of exports and imports to and from the EU forms nearly 50 percent of Turkey's total trade amount, with the share of manufactured commodities rising from 66 percent in 1990 to nearly 70 percent in 1999.¹³¹

4. Turkish Cultural and Religious Life

One factor bound up with Turkey's problems with democracy, making incorporation in the EU difficult, is the perceived cultural differences between Turkey and the rest of Europe. There are two opposing tendencies at work in the construction of Turkish identity. One is based on the modern, secular, Western-oriented; the other is traditional, Islamic and Oriental in its origins. Especially, the Pro-Islamist wing politicians claim that the EU is a "Christian Club" based on religious orientation.¹³² They also state that the differences between two religions make it impossible to form any kind of union with the EU.

Modern Turkish history is one of continuous struggle between these two tendencies. Modernization in Turkey is perceived to be a process of westernization. One primary goal of modernization is the recognition of Turkey as part of Europe. There is a strong desire among the Turkish intelligentsia, its bureaucracy and its military to gain acceptance as a European state. Thus, when the new Turkish Republic was established in 1923, its political leaders aimed to elevate Turkey to the level of contemporary civilizations, and to have Turkey accepted as a European state.¹³³ Ataturk was

¹³¹ Ibid, 30.

¹³² Bac, M. M., *The never ending Story: Turkey and the European Union*, para. 12.

¹³³ Mango, A., pp. 364-372.

determined to carry out a cultural revolution, by persuasion if possible, by force where necessary.¹³⁴

Turkey's population growth rate is definitely lower than that of the other Muslim countries, but in fact it is the highest among all EU countries and candidates (see Table 2 on page 79). With the current economic and social structure this population growth rate will result in more problems in the country, since GDP per capita is already quite low, on the other hand, unemployment rate is very high. The average age of the total population is relatively younger than the EU average. By some indicators, the sociological and cultural gap between Turkey and EU is tending to narrow by the modernization process of Turkey. The proportion of urban population has risen from 42 percent to 64 percent in ten years.¹³⁵ As people come to the big cities the birth rate has fallen sharply, the average of marriage age has gone up, and female participation in the labor force has risen.¹³⁶

On the other hand, as the social problems have increased as a result of the immigration, the Islamic religion has reemerged as a dynamic element in the culture to manage the unbalanced welfare distribution. The religion has developed a strong presence in the society, with religious foundations providing support in education, housing and health for those who are let down by the poor social services of the state.¹³⁷

Is Turkey really European? It is almost impossible to categorize Turkey among a group of states; it is neither a part of Christian Europe nor a part of the Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern culture. In the nineteenth century, there was a diplomatic and legal

¹³⁴ Ibid, 371.

¹³⁵ Clark, B., The Keystone of Europe, *European Business Journal*; London; 1999. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 17 July 2000.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Waxman, D., Conflict Studies 311, Turkey's Identity Crisis: Domestic Discord and Foreign Policy, p. 11, *Riset (Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism)*, August 1998.

acceptance of Turkey's incorporation to the European ranks with the 1856 Paris Conference, and Turkey was brought into the Concert of Europe. Yet throughout history, the Turks have been perceived by most of the Europeans as the "other" of Europe.¹³⁸

The EU has an important place in defining what is Europe and who is European. A new European Identity is being described into which Turkey's inclusion seems to be harder. As Samuel Huntington stated in his famous book "Clash of Civilizations," European civilization stops at the western borders of Turkey. This border is the place where Christian Civilization separates from Islamic Civilization, states Huntington.¹³⁹

In March 1997, the representatives of the German Christian Democratic Party declared that, "The European Union is a civilization project and within this civilization project Turkey has no place."¹⁴⁰ German Chancellor Kohl's reported claim that the EU is based on Christian Principles and cannot accommodate countries that do not share this identity echoes this argument.¹⁴¹ Again recently in an conference in Belgium, German MP Michael Glos declared that "Turkey has no place in the EU, and we are against Turkey's membership in the EU. Culturally and ideologically Turkey is different, for that reason and also Turkey's strategic location it is better to give Turkey a special status within the Union." And Turkish State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz responded by saying "We can not change our religion just because you say so. Turkey wants be a part of the EU. We do not want any special status or to be a special member of

¹³⁸ Bac, M. M., The never ending Story: Turkey and the European Union, para. 6.

¹³⁹ Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, pp. 209-218.

¹⁴⁰ Bac, M. M., The never ending Story: Turkey and the European Union, para. 2.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

the union.”¹⁴² Turkey’s cultural differences are the hidden obstacles for accession of Turkey into the EU.

The most obvious example of Turkey’s treatment by Europeans as an outsider is the visa regime of the EU members. Virtually all of the European countries including Russia demand visas from Turkish citizens before entering these countries (see Table 6 on page 84).¹⁴³ The EU’s visa free zone includes all of Western Europe, three Baltic States and the Central Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia and Hungary). The rest of the Balkans, Turkey and Russia stay out.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Russia’s visa-free zone includes all of the Eastern Europeans (former allies of the Soviet Union), the EU members and Turkey stay out. This shows that only the western Slavs of Eastern Europe, that are predominantly Catholic, enjoy the privilege of being welcome visa-free in both the EU and Russia, while Turkey stays out in both.¹⁴⁵ The impossibility of placing Turkey in Europe is part of the European Union's problem of what to do with Turkey. The perception of Turks as the Other of Europe is deeply embedded in the European collective memory, and despite many internal hostilities among the Europeans themselves, they can find in Turkey a common 'Other'.¹⁴⁶

The big change occurred in the 1920s with the westernization process of Turkey as a formal and fundamental policy under Kemal Ataturk. From this point on Turkey has directed her energies towards, "westernization," of which membership in the EU would be the climax. However, after 1980s, the forced and by the time voluntary westernization

¹⁴² Ozalp, G. and Sanliturk, H., Harsh Response from Yilmaz to the EU, *Milliyet (a Turkish daily newspaper)*, 20 October 2000.

¹⁴³ Emerson, M., *Redrawing the Map of Europe*, p. 17, New York, St. Martin’s Press Inc. 1998.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Bac, M. M., The never ending Story: Turkey and the European Union, para. 3.

began to collide with the traditional Islamic lifestyles within Turkey. A considerable part of the Turkish people and some intellectuals consider the relations between the EU and Turkey as weak and unsolvable puzzle because of the differences between two cultures.

B. TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GREECE AND THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

1. Turkey Greece Relations

Beyond the big non-agreement on the division of Cyprus, Turkey and Greece have other on going troubles. The major continuing problems between Turkey and Greece, which need to be addressed, are particularly related to the Aegean. The relations between Greece and Turkey deteriorated even further when the Turkish Army invaded Northern Cyprus in 1974 as a result of failed Greek attempt to take over the control of the whole island by Greek Cypriots with the support of Greek military junta.

At least since then, Greece has been convinced of Turkey's expansionist intentions toward the whole Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean region. Turkey, on the other hand, views the origin of conflicts primarily as a Greek attempt to enclose Turkey by a Greek controlled maritime area, and thus considerably sensitive about its rights and interests in the Aegean Sea. The loss of those rights and interests could block Turkey in a very narrow coastal zone and diminish its control and rights in the Aegean.

One of the big concerns of Turkish leaders about the EU was and is its giving a free hand to Greece to develop policies which were and are not in favor of Turkey. As a full member of the Union, Greece blocked Turkey's application for membership and also preventing the release of the financial aids, which were planned for the use of Turkey.¹⁴⁷ Besides, according to top officials and many intellectuals, Greece was the supporter of

¹⁴⁷ McBride, E., Survey: Turkey-Why are We Waiting?, *The Economist*, p.6.

Kurdish terrorist action in Turkey's Southeast region by supplying training bases in Cyprus and Greece.¹⁴⁸ Moreover three Greek ministers resigned from their offices because of their controversial role in the capture of Abdullah Ocalan by Turkish security units in Kenya.¹⁴⁹

After the devastating Earthquake in Turkey and later in Greece in August 1999, the relations between two countries began to improve. The solid results of this thaw are some agreements between two countries on so called soft issues, like tourism, culture, environment and combating organized crime (illegal immigration, drug trafficking and terrorism). However, the main problems are waiting to be addressed in the future. These problems are the breadth of territorial waters in Aegean Sea, control of the Aegean Sea airspace, militarization of Eastern Aegean Islands by Greece, delimitation of the continental shelf line in the Aegean Sea and exploration rights to any natural resources in the continental shelf and islands, islets and rocks in the Aegean Sea, which both countries claim. Greece does not want Turkey to join the EU or benefit from its financial aids before those problems are solved, certainly in favor of Greek benefits. However, an opportunity now exists to make the most of this opening for the greater good of strategic stability on Europe's Eastern Mediterranean doorstep.

European action could now be taken to help resolve the wider differences between Greece and Turkey within NATO. The US has been continuing to press Greece and Turkey to settle their disputes over the sovereignty of numerous islands in the Eastern

¹⁴⁸ Jane's Intelligence Review, *Instability in the Eastern Mediterranean, A Cypriot Crisis in the Making*, Special Report no 17, pp. 9-10, 1998.

¹⁴⁹ Pope, H., *Three Greek Ministers Quit Over Ocalan Affair; Fallout Could Distract Athens's Bid to Join Euro*, *Wall Street Journal*, New York, 19 February 1999. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

Mediterranean before the International Court of Justice. Continued disputed sovereignty over places such as the tiny islet of Kardak, (the Greek name Imia), is still the source of a risk to open conflict.

The root of the Aegean problem is that Greece and Turkey have very different points of view on the Aegean issues. The Greek side argues that international treaties are the prevailing factors in the disputes. Greece regards Turkey as following an aggressive policy that does not acknowledge the Greek sovereignty and rights and the legal status quo in the Aegean.¹⁵⁰ Greece argues that the status quo of Lausanne Treaty has somewhat changed because of subsequent agreements and international treaties, and Turkey intentionally is ignoring the fundamental provisions of international law in making its unilateral claims. Greece also implies that there is actually only one problem in the Aegean Sea, that of the delimitation of the continental shelf. The other disputes including territorial waters, control of airspace, and demilitarization of Eastern Aegean Islands are being addressed by existing international law, and therefore not really even under dispute.

Turkey, on the other hand, states that the Aegean sea and airspace over it is a common entity that should be shared between the two countries and that both countries should respect each other's vital interests. Turkey insists that the status quo set by the Lausanne Treaty is still valid, where both countries equally have limited maritime jurisdiction and rest of the sea is for mutual use. The Turkish side points out that any newly established treaty or regulation that Turkey is not part of can not change the status quo in favor of one side in the Aegean. Turkey also states that Greece is trying to

¹⁵⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, *Greek-Turkish relations*. Available on line: [<http://www.mfa.gr/foreign/bilateral/aegean.htm>]. Accessed on 20 November 2000.

undermine Turkish security by controlling the Aegean, that Greece disregards Turkey's fundamental rights and interests in the Aegean Sea.

The problems in the Aegean Sea must be resolved for the stability and peace in the southern flank of the Europe. Turkey's long lasting EU membership issue would pass an important obstacle, and reduce the tensions and improve overall economic and political well being of the countries within the EU.

2. The Cyprus Problem

Although Turkey always declares that the problems in Cyprus are not part of its relations with the EU, the EU has made it clear that the divided status of the island is a serious obstacle before Turkey's accession into the EU. Moreover, the application of Cyprus for membership and the accession talks with Cyprus have been another contentious aspect of the EU's relationship with Turkey. The decision to press ahead with them in the face of Ankara's protests has made for a volatile mix of diplomatic rhetoric about the impending consequences of the EU's negotiations with the Greek Cypriot regime. This consequence was compounded by the serious diplomatic crisis over the proposed deployment of Russian-made S-300 surface-to-air missiles to the island, which were the source of continued friction between Greece and Turkey in 1998.

Cyprus, because of its location, is also important for the security of Turkey's southern rim and a key element in the defense of southern Anatolia. This includes the security of the oil traffic that may start out of the Iskenderun Bay after the resumption of oil delivery via the Iraq-Turkish pipeline, and also the completion of a new possible pipeline between Azerbaijan and Turkey that will carry the Caspian oil to the European Market. Greece's encirclement of Turkey, as seen by Turkish political and military leadership, must be prevented from extending toward the east Mediterranean.

The poor relations that have existed between Turkey and Greece have been a constant focus of attention for NATO commands and the US, and the situation has not been helped by Europe giving Cyprus fast-track status as a candidate in the accession process. This could mean that Cyprus would be a full member of the EU in as little as five years. Turkey has threatened that it will forge closer links with its affiliates in northern Cyprus if the negotiations continue without Turkish Cypriot representation. Turkey is determined to keep and protect its rights and obligations emanating from the 1960 treaties, and it will continue to oppose the membership of Cyprus politically and legally prior to any solution in Cyprus. As in March 1995, the Turkish Foreign Minister Murat Karayalcin declared, if the EU finalizes the accession of Cyprus despite Turkish reactions, Turkey will be left with no option but to take steps toward achieving a similar integration with the Turkish part of the island.¹⁵¹ This position has been maintained until now by the following governments in Turkey.

While it is too early to say that the new warmth of relations between Greece and Turkey will have a tangible outcome on the issue of Cyprus, the EU could take a much more pro-active stance. It is not enough just to be engaging in accession talks with the Greek Cypriot regime in the vain hope that this may help to solve some of the difficulties which divide the island and cause so much of the friction between Greece and Turkey. The EU is now better able to influence Turkey's actions, by offering Turkey future membership. Now, Turkey could be persuaded to put pressure on Rauf Denktash, leader of the Turkish Cypriot regime, to adopt a more flexible approach to a Cypriot settlement. So far, there is a feeling that the EU has been driven more by Greek pressure from within than by a well-defined Cyprus policy of its own. Besides, the Greek government made it

¹⁵¹ Kramer, H., p. 177.

clear that no Greek parliament will ratify the accession of Poland if the EU has not first admitted Cyprus. It is Greece that is trying to determine the accession schedule of Cyprus by using its membership rights as a kind of threat against the other members. At various times Greece also made other threats, including the blocking of all external actions of the union.¹⁵²

The perception of the larger European states is that the government of Cyprus is not serious in attempting to reach a settlement with the Turkish Cypriots. At one level European Foreign Ministers have pressured the government of Cyprus to include representatives of the Turkish side in the formal talks. Italy, France have both suggested greater status for the Turkish Cypriot administration as necessarily being the people who will continue to be the rulers of the Northern Cyprus.¹⁵³ A more significant aspect of the issue is that government of Cyprus wants to go alone in the road to the EU membership. The government of Cyprus seeks immediate accession prior to any settlement in Cyprus, which in turn would strengthen its hands in the future negotiations. However, in his recent declaration Denktash once more stated that, "...a new basis should be created, then we will reconsider it. The basis is that Greek Cypriots do not alone represent Cyprus."¹⁵⁴

The talks between the leaders of the communities are ongoing, and gradually the international community is accepting the Turkish Cypriots more as an equal administration in the Cyprus.¹⁵⁵ The proposal of Denktash to establish a confederation based on equal sovereignty of both communities is getting more positive reflections after

¹⁵² Brewin, C., European Union perspectives on Cyprus accession, *Middle Eastern Studies*.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ The Associated Press news, Turkish Cypriot Head Quitting Talks, *The New York Times*, 24 November 2000.

¹⁵⁵ Turkmen, I., Kibris Izlenimleri (Impressions from Cyprus), *Hurriyet (A Turkish Daily Newspaper)*, 17 October 2000. Available online: [<http://www.hurriyet.com/>]. Accessed 17 October 2000.

the ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia and Caucasus.¹⁵⁶ However, the Greek Cypriot regime recently declared that Greek Cypriots would never accept a confederation solution.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ M2 Presswire, "Republic Cyprus: Cyprus Government will never Accept a Confederal Solution," Coventry, 14 November 2000.

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IV. MUTUAL BENEFITS OF TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU FOR TURKEY AND THE EU

Turkey is anxious to gain membership in the EU as quickly as possible, primarily for the benefits the country hopes to reap in terms of economy, support for democratization, and an undisputable place within European order and civilization. On the other hand, the EU is offering Turkey the membership due to Turkey's geo-strategic position as a buffer between Europe and the Middle East, and Turkey's potential as a core Islamic state in the region.

A. TURKISH BENEFITS FROM EUROPEAN UNION MEMBERSHIP

EU membership would definitely have an effect on the stagnating identity problem of Turkey by accepting Turkey into the European society. This new status could obviously help and enforce the western-minded elite in Turkey with respect to Islamist and Oriental-minded groups to carry on the westernization movement of country in terms of European standards.

The emergence of the new Turkic Republics in Central Asia and Trans-Caucasus, the rebirth of Turkey's awareness of its ethnic and cultural ties with populations in the Balkans (as a result of the conflicts in Yugoslavia), and a revival of Islam which has a potential influence in Turkish culture are all causing a redefinition of Turkish identity in the eyes of Turkish citizens and the international community at large. EU membership would act as symbol of acceptance of Turkey as a European country. However, the assimilation of Turkish culture into European culture will depend on the definition of exactly what comprises a "European identity." Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem stated at General Affairs Council, in September 1999 at Brussels:

*We consider ourselves both European and Asian...if being European is a "historical" or "geographical" definition, we live and we have lived 700 years of our history in Europe, and a European power... If being European is defined by religious criteria, then the setting might not be appropriate. But if "European culture" is defined, as it is by the EU, that is, mainly by factors such as "democracy, human rights, gender equality, rule of law and secularism" than in spite of the need for further progress on some points, we have shared and contributed to this contemporary "European Culture" for 75 years.*¹⁵⁸

As Cem stated, if European identity is defined in terms of geography and political common values, then the Turkish population will have the chance to adapt itself to the European norms in order to transition into the international community as a European country. The acceptance of Turkey as a European country and Turks as Europeans would diminish the role and influence of Oriental and Islamic based factors in Turkish identity.

By joining the EU as a full member, Turkey could benefit from the EU's economic support, which the union is using to help developing the political and economic infrastructure of the countries in need.

Currently, trade between Turkey and the EU forms 50 percent of Turkey's imports and exports (see Table 5 on page 83). Previously, Turkish exports primarily consisted of agricultural products, but Turkey's exportations of industrial products have increased dramatically within the past ten years. The creditability of Turkey in international money markets will be positively affected with its entrance to the union. Good creditability in international money markets will likely enable Turkey to develop

¹⁵⁸ Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem's speech at General Affairs Council, September 13, 1999, Brussels, in Bac, Meltem M., *The Impact of European Union on Turkish Politics, East European Quarterly*, Boulder, Summer 2000.

new sources of income as well as increase foreign investment in Turkey, which is now as low as 0.5 percent of Turkey's GDP (see Table 3B on page 81).¹⁵⁹

The EU is also encouraging Turkey to create a functioning market economy that will survive competitively amongst the pressures and market forces of the EU. The Copenhagen requirements (and thus, the EU) have already had positive influences for Turkey even prior to its admission. Because of the Copenhagen Criteria, the Turkish government is trying to amend new regulations and reforms to meet the membership requirements in the economical area. A stable and well functioning market economy that meets the EU regulations will be a crucial goal for Turkey's short-term policies. The devastating inflation rates of 1990's are coming down from 100s to 40 percent levels. According to September 2000 data, the inflation rate has come to the level of 49 percent in consumer prices.¹⁶⁰

The European Union has been very influential in prompting fundamental changes in Turkey's democratization process. This influence is very likely to go on for the next reforms and changes in the same area by the time. The EU wields great power over its potential members, with incentives such as financial aid, the promise of membership, and institutional guidance to strengthen democracy and economy. The increasing strength of Turkish civil society and the growing demands from the people for more democratic government are also influential in this restructuring.

In Turkey's case, the EU has mainly pushed for political changes. The political criteria for membership require a functioning democracy with secure and intact political

¹⁵⁹ EU Documents, Regular Report from the Commission on the Progress Towards Accession Turkey 2000, p. 30.

¹⁶⁰ _____, Eylul'u Kurtardik (the inflation rate in September was low as aimed by the Turkish government), *Sabah* (A Turkish Daily Newspaper), 04 October 2000.

institutions. Given the current political context, Turkey hardly meets the criteria. Nevertheless, Turkey's desire for EU membership is so strong that the government is trying to implement reforms by simply saying, "the EU wants them." The Turkish government's use of the EU to manipulate public opinion about certain reforms appears to be an effective tool. In the 1990s, after the Customs Union with the EU, Turkish perception was that the Union would help Turkey foster democratization.

Moreover, EU membership could also have some effects on Kurdish issue. EU membership, if skillfully managed, could help resolve the ongoing Kurdish conflict. Because the EU requires candidates to meet the Union's democratic criteria, including granting political and cultural rights for minorities, Turkey's official membership status has strong potential to ease the tensions in southeastern Turkey. Although the Turkish Constitution does not recognize the Kurds as a minority, recognition of their rights will likely follow the implementation of all democratic norms of the EU.

In addition, many leading Kurds inside and outside Turkey including the leader of PKK Abdullah Ocalan have changed their views about an independent Kurdish state.¹⁶¹ Those Kurds are not calling for independence, even autonomy, but rather a Kurdish community with full social, cultural and political rights. The candidacy status of Turkey in the EU and the capture of Abdullah Ocalan by Turkish security forces both have great importance on the change of policies in the Kurdish side.

Apparently, an independent, landlocked, poor, economically insufficient Kurdistan would be no help to its citizens. Moreover it would have to deal with the huge

¹⁶¹ Pope, H., Turkey Tones Down Feud With Greece, But EU Membership Has New Obstacle, *Wall Street Journal*; New York; 13 March 2000. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

uncertainties of the region and also inner conflicts among Kurds.¹⁶² On the other hand, a Turkey in the EU could also carry the Kurds to the Europe as well, and as a region the southeastern part of Turkey one day might enjoy the benefits of the Union, such as in the case of Northern Ireland of UK or the Basque region of Spain.

Under the Amsterdam Treaty, the present Article 6 of the Treaty is amended to enshrine a constitutional principle that the EU is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and rule of law.¹⁶³ If Turkey wants take part as a member in this organization, then Turkey has no alternative other than to adopt these principles.

There is no strong alternative for Turkey other than the EU in the region. The leadership of the Middle East was never regarded as a major goal for Turkey. During World War I, the declaration of Islamic Holy war (Jihad) against European powers by the then Sultan and the Caliph of the Ottoman Empire found no response from the Islamic nations of the Middle East. On the contrary, many Arab emirates had cooperated with British and French soldiers to fight against the Turkish forces.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, Turkey's political and economical relations are tied mainly to Europe rather than the Middle East.

Today, some politicians and pro Islamic groups are still pursuing this goal in Turkey. However, Turkey could be in a better position with its relations within the region, if it becomes a full member of the EU. Integration of Turkey into Europe in terms of political, economical, and security areas would definitely increase its creditability and leadership position in the region it occupies.

¹⁶² _____, The Kurds, an Ancient Tragedy, *The Economist*, p. 50, London, 20 February 2000.

¹⁶³ EU Documents, Treaty on European Union, Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, p. 13. Available online:[<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html>]. Accessed on 24 November 2000.

¹⁶⁴ Andrew Mango, *Ataturk*, p.164, 179, 180.

Turkey's other important tie with the West is its relationship with the US. The US government supports Turkish membership in the EU. During 1988 to 1999 senior diplomats from the US were engaged in an intense effort for the inclusion of Turkey by the EU.¹⁶⁵ However, US interests in the region, where Turkey is located are somewhat different than the EU. Turkey's relations with the US are mainly based on geo-strategic considerations. Despite the ups and downs of this relationship, Turkey's support was important in an area where US commitments were complicated by its dependency on oil and its policy of supporting Israel.¹⁶⁶

Another aspect of US-Turkey relations is the balancing effect of this relationship against Russia-Iran cooperation. Russia and Iran have well-developed relations and cooperation particularly in the military realm. After the deterioration of US –Iran relations, the vacuum formed by the US' absence was filled by Russia. The three countries, Russia, Iran and Turkey are competing, especially in controlling and influencing the Caspian Basin and Central Asia. The apparent US support behind Turkey led Russia to form a secret alliance with Iran by creating very close relations.

In the areas of military and technology, Russia is providing Iran high-tech know-how and military equipment. Recently, Russia revealed its intentions to withdraw from 1995 Arms –Sales Deal negotiated with the US.¹⁶⁷ The deal was limiting Russian sales of tanks and other conventional weapons to Iran. The active role of Turkey during the Gulf Crisis enhanced this position.

¹⁶⁵ Kinzer, S., US Pressing EU to Be more Friendly to Turkey, *The New York Times*, 01 May 2000.

¹⁶⁶ Mayall, Simon V, *Turkey: Thwarted Ambition*, McNair Paper 56, p. 92, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Washington DC, National Defense University, January 1997.

¹⁶⁷ Brode, J. M., Russia Ending Deal on Arms Negotiated by Gore, *The New York Times*, 23 November 2000.

Turkey, by soliciting membership to the EU, is clearly demonstrating a desire to take part in the newly emerging security and defense system of Europe. Although the threat from the Soviet Union has dissipated, new sources of potential warfare (which would involve Turkey due to its proximity) have emerged as a result of the conflicts of various scales in Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Balkans.

The potentially explosive situation calls into question the effectiveness of existing strategic alliances in the face of new security challenges. Could Turkey, a NATO member, rely on its Western Alliances in any threat against its security while the EU is forming its own defense system? The European Union defense ministers have agreed to commit personnel and equipment to a military force intended to enable EU countries to unite in response to any threat to the alliance's interests. According to recent developments, the ministers of EU member states had agreed to provide a pool of 100,000 personnel, 400 combat planes and 100 warships to make up the Euro Rapid Reaction Force - which would be a maximum of 60,000-strong at any one time.¹⁶⁸

B. THE EUROPEAN UNION BENEFITS FROM TURKISH MEMBERSHIP

Because Turkey's geographic location poses threats but at the same time promises potential for international security, Turkey-EU relations are critical in terms of strategic defense considerations. At the crossroads of two major continents and the center of an unstable political environment, Turkey could play a key role in stopping radical Islamic movements, and resolving other problems in Caucasus, Middle East and the Balkans. As Gunter Verheugen, European Commissioner for enlargement, stated, "The EU did not grant Turkey its candidate status out of charity. Europe is following a strategy that

¹⁶⁸ BBC News, EU ministers approve army plan Monday, 20 November, 2000, 17:24 GMT.

envisages the crucial role, the strategic importance of Turkey for the security of Europe and security of the Western Alliance. It is in our interest to make sure that Turkey is firmly anchored in the family of Western democracies and nations."¹⁶⁹

From the perspective that Turkey sits at the edge of three distinct regions of conflict, (the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus), Turkey plays the role of an insulator in all of the security regions surrounding it, and will also play a peripheral role in any battles that take place in those regions.¹⁷⁰ Therefore, it is in the EU's best interest to ally itself strongly with Turkey, as Turkey is clearly in a position to make a significant contribution to the stability and security of Europe.

Turkey also has a very unique location that could connect the main fossil energy sources of both Middle East and Central Asia to Europe. The oil reserves in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea region are another source of the EU's interest in Turkey. The fact that Turkey is located on the route planned for a 1080-mile oil pipeline, between Azerbaijan and Turkey, makes this country even more economically attractive. Although some obstacles remain, the officials of countries and oil industry representatives seemed convinced in an oil gas conference in November 2000, in Paris that the line is quite likely to proceed.¹⁷¹ The US and Turkish officials have consistently stated that the pipeline is the best way to avoid the increasing number of tankers passing through the crowded and treacherous Turkish Straits. The US government has continued since the beginning to push the project as a way of providing a new route that could diminish the role of Russia and Iran and eventually weaken their influences in the entire region.

¹⁶⁹ Guttman, R. J., European Commissioner for Enlargement: Gunter Verheugen, para. 6.

¹⁷⁰ Buzan, B and Diez, T., *The European Union and Turkey*, para. 12, *Survival*; London; Spring 1999. Available online: [<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.htm>]. Accessed on 22 August 2000.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

The EU could benefit from Turkish membership in the area of new economic markets. With its growing economy and emerging middle class, Turkey is becoming a valuable market for the EU products. With the increasing capacity of the Turkish economy and a population of 65-million, Turkey could contribute a great deal to the common market of the EU. Although the purchasing capacity of the population is not at a satisfactory level, the newly emerging Turkish middle class has been demanding every new modern convenience or technological advance to emerge. Virtually every socio-economic class wants to own goods such as washing machine, color television, refrigerator, and a car. Computers are very common through out the country, and particularly in the west.¹⁷²

Throughout 1990s, the telecommunication system developed rapidly, and Internet usage dramatically increased. As the survey of the Economist indicates, even in the illegally built houses in the districts of big cities like Istanbul and Ankara, people have running water, electricity, telephones, refrigerators and televisions. The survey also points out, "Over the course of two or three generations, Turkey is turning the penniless Anatolian peasant into petty bourgeois."¹⁷³

Turkey has a relatively young population and a higher population growth rate in comparison to current EU members and the other candidates (see Table 2 on page 79). Aging European countries need eager and dynamic youthful workers.¹⁷⁴ A cheap labor

¹⁷² McBride, E., Survey: Turkey- Last Line of Defense and Why are We Waiting?, *The Economist*, p. 6, London, 10 June 2000.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Clark, B., The Keystone of Europe, para. 5.

force is still a big need inside the EU. Currently, 29 percent of Turkey's population is under 14 years old, and 65 percent of the population is between the ages of 15 to 65.¹⁷⁵

EU membership of Turkey could enable the EU to become more effective on Turkey's domestic and international affairs. After Turkey's accession into the Union, the EU could put more pressure on Turkey to create policies to settle problems in Turkey's international and domestic affairs. As in the case of Austria, when the EU had imposed sanctions on Austria as a response to the entrance of far right Freedom Party into the coalition government, the EU could also persuade Turkey to comply with certain socio-political norms, and to settle long-lasting conflicts with Greece.¹⁷⁶ Because Turkey will have to meet EU requirements both in domestic and international domains, membership in the EU will entail that Turkey surrender a considerable amount of sovereignty rights to the Union.

¹⁷⁵ CIA, World Factbook 2000-Turkey.

¹⁷⁶ Daley, S., European Union is Moving to lift Sanctions it Imposed on Austria, *The New York Times*, 15 July 2000.

V. CONCLUSION

Turkey's eligibility for candidacy and subsequent accession into the EU is a complex issue. As long as the EU upholds its policy that the candidates must meet accession criteria prior to negotiations, given the current economic, political and social circumstances in Turkey, Turkey's accession requires more time than Turkish government and society expected. The EU has stated the rules for the EU membership very clearly. If the EU is convinced that Turkey has not met the criteria, then the EU will not initiate accession negotiations with Turkey, regardless of Turkey's qualifications as officially noted in EU documents. The only obvious benefit of candidacy status for Turkey is that Turkey will be able to access the financial aid of the EU for helping the candidates to align their economic and political infrastructure according to EU norms. This could also be the restatement of Turkey's acceptance as a "European" country.

As compared to many Islamic countries in the Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia, the democratic and economic structure of Turkey seems to be a success in terms of having met western criteria for democracy and a market economy. Indeed, most of the Middle East states are religious oriented, more or less autocratic regimes with less respect for rule of law and human rights. However, when comparing Turkey with western countries, Turkey's success falls short.

Nevertheless, if Turkey is to meet the Copenhagen Criteria for membership, then Turkey must adopt new regulations to grant more political rights for all its citizens, including the Kurds, and must succeed in establishing a strong market economy that meets the EU norms.

Contrary to popular belief, the EU does not have any visions of dividing Turkey on the basis of its ethnic origins, and the EU has reiterated its views on the issue several times in its reports. However, the lingering questions about minority rights have been perceived by many officials and politicians as a serious danger for the unitary status of the state. Moreover, Turkey has perceived the EU's statements on Turkey's shortcomings about its eligibility as a discriminatory act. Nevertheless, addressing and working towards changing EU's negative perceptions of Turkey should be regarded as a secondary priority—one to be reckoned with only when the necessary reforms that help build democracy, economy and social and cultural rights in Turkey have been successfully implemented.

More critical priorities include Turkey's domestic infrastructure, which does not provide a suitable situation to commence key radical political reforms. The political diversion in coalition government, corruption in state institutions, military influence in political affairs, radical Islamic action, Kurdish issue prevents the necessary reforms from being implemented.

In addition to addressing domestic concerns, the long lasting disputes with Greece and Cyprus problem will continue to affect Turkey EU relations. The disputes between Greece and Turkey appear to be unsolvable in the immediate future. Any change in the Status quo in the Aegean Sea would be very dangerous in the sense that such a change could provoke tensions between Turkey and Greece. Both prior to and after Turkey's accession into the EU, the disputes between Greece and Turkey can be frozen for a time until a mutual confidence and understanding emerges between the parties. A period of

freezing the problems (whatever the length of the time period is) would definitely be better than any serious conflict between Greece and Turkey.

Recent developments confirm that, although the basic features of a democratic system exist in Turkey, Turkey's political system still does not meet the Copenhagen political criteria. There are serious shortcomings in terms of human rights and protection of minorities. Torture is not systematic, but still widespread, and freedom of expression is regularly restricted by the authorities. The National Security Council continues to play a major role in political life. Although there have been some improvements in terms of the independence of the judiciary, the state of emergency court system remains in place.

In recent months encouraging signs of democratization have been emerging. The government and Parliament have worked to adopt some key laws regulating political life, the justice system and protection of human rights. It is too early to assess the impact of these measures, but these efforts should be pursued and extended to all citizens, including those of Kurdish origin.

Turkey has many of the characteristics of a market economy. Turkey's economy should be able to cope, albeit with difficulties, with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, (provided that sustainable macroeconomic stability is attained and there is further progress towards the implementation of legal and structural reform programs.) Turkey has continued its debt consolidation policies, and economic imbalances have been reduced. The public deficit and inflation have been reduced. Pension reform has been approved by parliament. The efficiency of revenue collection procedures has been improved. The constitution has been changed to permit international arbitration.

Despite tremendous obstacles, neither Turkey nor the EU can afford to break away from each other. A Turkey with EU membership would be more influential in the region as a politically and economically strong and stable country. Vice versa, a rejected and even insulted Turkey would be unlikely to establish a leadership for itself in the Middle East, nor in the Black Sea, since its relationships with other countries in the region are rather shaky. The possible conflicts in the region where Turkey lays and any domestic conflicts inside Turkey could highly affect the stability and peace in southern Europe as well.

Turkey could be a stabilizer in Europe's most volatile corners: Trans-Caucasus, Central Asia and the turbulent Balkans. Instability in this area is due to economic underdevelopment, poverty linked to excessive population growth, a lack of a working democracy and the power of Islamic fundamentalism. Turkey is at the center of this crescent, and could play a key role as a model to these states that it is possible for an Islamic country to become a prosperous and modernized democracy. Turkey's accession into EU is vital for both parties to handle the destabilizing factors on the Southeast border of Europe, to improve Turkish political and economical life, and to create cooperation based on Turkish and EU's capabilities.

Turkey does have problems, which need to be addressed, but they need be no more difficult than those which other aspiring EU members must surmount. Likewise, Turkey has made tangible progress in the areas it has been asked to address, and eagerly awaits more realistic recognition of its efforts to join the EU. In the wake of last year's earthquakes which made Turkey particularly economically vulnerable, the opportunity to

maximize relations with Greece should be made to redirect Turkey towards a Western identity, and nurture its potential as a future European state.

It is up to the EU to acknowledge Turkey's progress and give credit for its allegiance to the West, and Europe in particular. If Turkey is qualified to defend Europe, then it is qualified to be European. The modern state of Turkey has yearned to belong to the West and conducted itself in Western ways in looking out for its best interests, so much so that its destiny should lie soundly within Europe as a European country.

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APPENDIX

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TABLES FOR 12 EU CANDIDATES AND

TURKEY

Table 1: General Information Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey

Country Name	Area (In Square Thousand Km)	Population (In Millions)	GDP 1000 million Dollars (Purchasing Power Standards)	GDP Per Capita in Dollars (Purchasing Power Standards)
Bulgaria	110.91	8.21	32.73	3995
Cyprus	9.25	0.67	10.20	14535
Czech Republic	78.87	10.28	109.40	10625
Estonia	45.23	1.44	9.18	6630
Hungary	93.03	10.07	91.89	9095
Latvia	64.59	2.43	11.82	4930
Lithuania	65.30	3.70	19.47	5270
Malta	0.30	0.40	5.52	11730
Poland	312.69	38.65	256.62	6630
Romania	238.39	22.46	108.97	4845
Slovakia	49.04	5.40	47.26	8755
Slovenia	20.27	1.99	25.50	12750
Turkey	774.82	64.33	322.49	5015
The EU Total/Average	2661.00	356.00	7522.00	21000
12 Candidates' (excluding Turkey) Total/Average	1087.86	105.70	726.65	9893
13 Candidates' (including Turkey) Total/Average	1862.67	170.03	1051.20	6182
Overall Total/Average	4523.67	526.03	8573.20	16294

Sources from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000 and for the EU members' data from CIA World Factbook for Countries.

Table 2: Demographic Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey

Country Name	Population (In Millions)	Population Growth Rate (Percent of Population)	Birth Rate (Per 1000 of Population)	Fertility Rate (Per Woman)
Bulgaria	8.21	-1.2	8.1	1.1
Cyprus	0.67	0.6	13.3	1.9
Czech Republic	10.28	-0.1	9.1	1.2
Estonia	1.44	-0.6	8.5	1.2
Hungary	10.07	-0.3	8.1	1.3
Latvia	2.43	-0.8	7.8	1.1
Lithuania	3.70	-0.3	9.8	1.3
Malta	0.40	0.7	12.8	1.9
Poland	38.65	0.0	10.1	1.4
Romania	22.46	-0.2	10.8	1.4
Slovakia	5.40	0.1	10.0	1.3
Slovenia	1.99	0.1	9.4	1.3
Turkey	64.33	1.3	18.7	2.0
The EU	356.00	0.1	9.0	1.4
12 Candidates' (excluding Turkey) Total/Average	105.70	-0.2	9.7	1.3
13 Candidates' (including Turkey) Total/Average	170.03	0.4	13.1	1.6

Sources from CIA World Factbook 2000, Populations from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000.

Table 3A: Economic Data Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey.

Country Name	GDP 1000 million Dollars (Purchasing Power Standards)	GDP Per Capita in Dollars (Purchasing Power Standards)	GDP Annual Growth Rate (Percent)	Agriculture in GDP	Industry in GDP (Note 1)	Services in GDP
Bulgaria	32.73	3995	2.4	17.3	26.8	55.9
Cyprus	10.20	14535	4.5	4.2	21.1	74.7
Czech Republic	109.40	10625	-0.2	3.7	41.8	54.5
Estonia	9.18	6630	-1.1	5.7	25.3	69
Hungary	91.89	9095	4.5	5.5 (1998)	32.8 (1998)	61.7 (1998)
Latvia	11.82	4930	0.1	4.0	27.6	68.4
Lithuania	19.47	5270	-4.1	8.8	31.1	60.1
Malta	5.52	11730	4.0	3	26.0	71.0
Poland	256.62	6630	4.2	3.8	36.6	59.6
Romania	108.97	4845	-3.2	15.5	36.3	48.2
Slovakia	47.26	8755	1.9	4.5	35.1	60.4
Slovenia	25.50	12750	4.9	3.6	37.5	58.9
Turkey	322.49	5015	-5.0	14.3	27.1	58.6
The EU Total/ Average	7522.000	21000	2.6	n/a	n/a	n/a

Sources from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000 and the EU members' data from CIA World Factbook 2000

Note 1: Including Construction

Table 3B: Economic Data Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey

Country Name	Inflation Rate (Percent in Consumer Prices)	Budget Deficit (In Percent of GDP)	Foreign Direct Investment Net Inflow (Percent of GDP)
Bulgaria	2.6	0.2	6.1
Cyprus	1.3	-5.5 (1998)	2.1 (1998)
Czech Republic	2.0	-1.6	9.1
Estonia	4.6	-4.6	4.6
Hungary	10.0	-3.7	2.9
Latvia	2.4	-3.9	5.8
Lithuania	0.8	-3.4 (1998)	4.5
Malta	2.1	n/a	3.4 (1998)
Poland	7.2	-2.7	4.3
Romania	45.8	-4.4 (1997)	2.4
Slovakia	10.6	-0.6	3.7
Slovenia	6.1	-0.6	0.2
Turkey	64.9	-7.9 (1997)	0.4 (1998)
The EU Total/Average	2.1	n/a	n/a

Sources from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000, and the EU members' data from CIA World Factbook 2000

Table 4: Labor Force Table for 12 EU Candidates and Turkey

Country Name	Population (In Millions)	Unemployment Rate (Percent)	Agriculture in Labor Force (Percent of Total)	Industry in Labor Force (Percent of Total Including Construction)	Services in Labor Force (Percent of Total)
Bulgaria	8.21	17.0	26.6	29.1	44.3
Cyprus	0.67	3.6	9.3	22.3	68.4
Czech Republic	10.28	8.7	5.2	40.1	54.6
Estonia	1.44	11.7	8.8	31.8	59.4
Hungary	10.07	7.0	7.1	34.0	58.9
Latvia	2.43	14.5	15.3	26.0	58.7
Lithuania	3.70	14.1	20.2	26.9	52.9
Malta	0.40	5.5	5.0	24.0	71.0
Poland	38.65	12.5	18.1	31.4	50.5
Romania	22.46	6.8	41.7	27.6	30.7
Slovakia	5.40	16.2	7.4	38.4	54.2
Slovenia	1.99	7.6	10.2	38.5	51.3
Turkey	64.33	7.6	41.3	22.7	35.7
The EU	356.00	10.0	n/a	n/a	n/a

Sources from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000.

Table 5: Export and Import Trade Rates of 12 Candidates and Turkey with the EU

Country Name	GDP 1000 million Dollars (Purchasing Power Standards)	Exports with EU (In Percent of Total)	Imports with EU (In Percent of Total)
Bulgaria	32.73	52.6	48.6
Cyprus	10.20	50.7	57.3
Czech Republic	109.40	69.2	64.0
Estonia	9.18	72.7	65.0
Hungary	91.89	76.2	64.4
Latvia	11.82	62.5	54.5
Lithuania	19.47	50.1	49.7
Malta	5.52	n/a	n/a
Poland	256.62	70.5	64.9
Romania	108.97	65.5	60.4
Slovakia	47.26	59.4	51.7
Slovenia	25.50	66.0	68.6
Turkey	322.49	52.6	53.9

Sources from the EU Regular Reports on Candidates Progress towards Accession for the year 2000.

Table 6: The Visa Policy in Europe

Country Name	The EU Visa	Russian Visa	12 Candidates' Visa
Russia	<i>Required</i>	n/a	<i>Required</i>
Turkey	Required	Required	Required
Bulgaria	<i>Required</i>	Not Required	Not Required
Romania	<i>Required</i>	Not Required	Not Required
Czech Republic	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Hungary	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Poland	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Slovakia	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Slovenia	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Estonia	Not Required	<i>Required</i>	Not Required
Latvia	Not Required	<i>Required</i>	Not Required
Lithuania	Not Required	<i>Required</i>	Not Required
The EU 15 Members	n/a	<i>Required</i>	Not Required

Sources from: Michael Emerson, "*Redrawing the Map of Europe*", p. 17, New York, St. Martin's Press Inc. 1998.

Table 7: The Results in Last Four Parliamentary Elections in Percent of Total Votes in Turkey

Name of Political Party	Election Years and Results (In Percent of Total Votes)			
	1987	1991	1995	1999
Motherland Party	36.31	24.01	19.65	13.22
True Path Party	19.14	27.03	19.18	12.01
Democratic Left Party	8.53	10.75	14.64	22.19
Republican People's Party	24.74 (Note 1)	20.75 (Note 1)	10.71	8.71
Nationalist Action Party	2.93 (Note 2)	(Note 3)	8.18	17.98
Welfare Party	7.16	16.88	21.38	15.41 (Note 4)

Note 1: In 1987 and 1991 elections the Republican People's party was originally represented within Social Democratic Populist Party

Note 2: In 1987 elections the name of the party was Nationalist Working Party.

Note 3: This party entered the elections within True Path Party as a cooperating partner and after the elections the winning MPs turned back to their party.

Note 4: The Welfare Party was banned by the Constitutional Court in 1997, now the Virtue Party is in mainstream Turkish politics as the successor of Welfare Party.

Sources: From the statistical election reports of *Cumhuriyet* (A Turkish Daily Newspaper). Available online: [<http://secim.cumhuriyet.com.tr/raporlar/miloy87.cfm> (miloy91.cfm, miloy95.cfm, miloy99.cfm)]

**Table 8: The Human Sufferings in Terrorist Fighting in Southeastern Turkey
(Between Dates: 19 July 1987 - 31 September 2000)**

Group Name	Dead	Wounded
Military Forces	3,654	8,529
Police Forces	190	655
Village Guards	1,177	1,821
Government Employed	307	204
Civilian People	4,447	5,448
Terrorists	23,342	620
Total	33,117	17,277

Sources from the Documents of Governorship to the State of Emergency Legislation in Southeastern Turkey. Available online [http://www.ohal.gov.tr/f_tarihce.htm]

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